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Philadelphia Independent

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NO ONE.

VOLUME ONE, ISSUE NO EIGHTEEN

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BLUE BLOOD WOOS RED STATES WITH PURPLE HEART

Fresh Off the Swift Boat
Captain Longface Makes Bid
To Pilot Ship of State

KERRY'S KILLER RESUMÉ

Beantown's Brightest Boy
Takes Out Golden Cufflinks
& Rolls Up Silken Sleeves

BY IAN HUNTINGTON

BOSTON, Mass.—While waiting for the Democratic Party to consummate its selection of John Kerry, the formerly presumptive presidential nominee, I endured an endless stream of warm-up men and introductory speeches. My "Hall Pass"—the lowest possible credential—meant that I was usually banished to the seventh level of the Fleet Center, but allowed for brief periods to walk around the convention floor. There I was jostled by the assembled semi-powerful delegates and fairly important persons, and had the honor of being gently pushed out of the way by one of Russell Simmons's bodyguards.

The modern televised convention is part political infomercial and part NFL playoff game, except the other team never even enters the stadium. The delegates cut loose to the arena classic "Millennium Funk Party." On the last night, the Indiana delegation's excitement boiled over into a spontaneous chant of "Kerry, Kerry." The only thing missing was the possibility that anything could happen on any given play. Most of the time, I found it hard to watch the actual speakers and focused instead on the giant projections above them. An event designed for television looks better on a screen.

In case you missed the three hours of prime-time broadcasts, the theme of this year's convention was "strength." Strength, said Bill Clinton, goes hand in hand with wisdom. Bad leaders, said Teresa Heinz Kerry, sometimes confuse strength with wisdom, leading to unnecessary deaths. Strength is something that U.S. families, homeland security, military forces and alliances could all use an extra helping of, said John Edwards. And it is "more than tough words," said John Kerry himself. The Democratic Party platform used the word "strength" 106 times. On the convention's final night, I stumbled onto an unlocked supply closet filled with boxes of unused signs that said, simply, "STRENGTH."

For four days, I had listened to speaker after speaker extol John Kerry. As the moment of his arrival approached, I became excited each time I heard, "And now... let me introduce..." but it was only ever an introduction for the next introducer. The most frightening part of this one-sided display? It worked. I was more sincerely excited to see John Kerry than I could have previously imagined. Someone was screaming when the camera finally showed him coming down through the crowd. Moments later, I realized that someone was me. "Reporting for duty," he answered, with a salute as stiff as Michelangelo's David.

This year, Democratic unity and strength meant that any real debate onstage or conflict in the convention hall was out of the question. But when the Democratic

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★★★ HOW TO VOTE ★★★

November 2 is the presidential election, and both candidates consider Pennsylvania crucial to their plans for a nationwide victory. Here's how to vote:
1. REGISTER TO VOTE: Any Pennsylvania resident who is 18 years or older is eligible to vote. To register, visit Room 142 in City Hall, get a form from your neighborhood post office or library, or download one from www.fec.gov/votereg/vr.htm. You

must register by Oct. 4 to vote in the November election.
2. VOTE ON NOV. 2: To find your polling place, visit www.seventy.org, call 215-686-1505, or call 215-557-3600. The polls are open between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. If this is your first time voting, be sure to bring along a driver's license, U.S. passport, or student I.D. If you believe you have been unjustly denied your right to vote, call 1-877-VOTES-PA.

CHRIS RANDOLPH'S PLAN TO VANQUISH BOSS BOB BRADY

The Challenges of Mounting
A Third Party Campaign
In the State of Pennsylvania

QUIXOTE FOR CONGRESS

BY CHRISTINE SMALLWOOD

HARRISBURG, Pa.—Chris Randolph's 2003 campaign for Philadelphia's City Council lasted less than forty-eight hours. Randolph printed no signs, won no endorsements, held no events and had no platform. His campaign consisted of several phone calls made in the late hours to his friends and co-workers, asking them to write him in as an at-large candidate. On November 4th, some of them did. Two months later, Randolph tried to find out how many. He went online and discovered that the city's election reports (at least those posted to the Internet) lump all individual write-in candidates together as "write-in." The result of his short campaign remained a mystery.

"My name wasn't even there," he later reflected. "I was angry that we have such a malfunctioning democracy." His sense of how government ought to work was offended; his long-held suspicions about how it really worked were confirmed. A month later, he resolved to run for Congress. This time, he would get his name printed on the ballot.

To get on the ballot, Randolph had to surmount the high barriers set by the election laws of Pennsylvania, among the country's least friendly states for candidates who are not sponsored by a recognized party. An unaffiliated candidate for congress in Colorado, for instance, needs to gather 800 signatures to get his or her name on the ballot. In New Jersey it's a mere hundred signatures. A Briton who wants to join the House of Commons needs only ten supporters to get on the ballot. But here an independent congressional candidate must gather two percent of the highest number of votes cast for an officer in his or her district in the last election. That meant Randolph had to collect 2,408 signatures—1,408 more than a candidate from either of the major parties—and pay a \$150 filing fee.

But somehow, on the afternoon of August 2, Randolph found himself standing on the second floor of the North Office Building in Harrisburg, at the Bureau of Commissions, Elections and Legislation. In his arms was a thick sheaf of photocopied petitions bearing the names of 2,924 registered voters. Across the countertop was a man in a suit, Elections Manager Jonathan Marks. Randolph set his petitions down on the counter and Marks divided them into two piles; folded originals and stapled photocopies. As he sorted the petitions, he began crossing out signatures he deemed illegible or obviously invalid names. "Got to get in the zone," he muttered to himself. A few moments later, Marks was joined by a round-faced woman and a silent, dour man in beige suits. These were Commissioner of Elections Monna Accurti and Deputy Chief Counsel Larry Boyle, who, after a short

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FIVE YEAR DIARY

FEBRUARY 7TH, 1960: Got up and listened to Archers. Tried to help Mummy but did not feel very well. Awful stomach ache. Had dinner. Watched Go Kart racing. Mummy went out in car. We watched T.V. all evening. FEBRUARY 7TH, 1960: Susan Hanley came over for the evening. We sat and knitted and watched T.V. We had a good laugh. Go play on. She went home at 10:30. FEBRUARY 10TH, 1960: Mummy worked in morning. Daddy went to Go-Go's. We knitted and listened to radio in afternoon. Saw Ten Commandments in evening, wonderful film. FEBRUARY 11TH, 1960: Went to pictures in evening with Mummy and Sue Harvey. Went to see Pillow Talk...

FBI BLOODHOUNDS COLLARING THOUSANDS BURY BILL OF RIGHTS IN BUSH'S BRAMBLES CHASE THEIR TAILS AS OSAMA PLAYS DEAD

INNOCENCE IS NO DEFENSE

Thousands Imprisoned
For The Way They Look
& The God They Worship

THREE SUSPICIOUS CASES

Drawing on Paper Tablecloth
Stopping at a Stop Sign
Having the Wrong Face

Late this May, Attorney General John Ashcroft released photos of seven suspected terrorists as one of the government's "Be on the Look-out Alerts." Over the next twenty-four hours, the FBI received more than 2,000 tips from all over the country, one of which came from an employee of a Philadelphia water pump facility who noticed that one of his co-workers, a Jordanian, bore a striking resemblance to the wanted Kuwaiti Amer el-Maati. So he revealed his suspicions to the boss, who contacted law enforcement officials, who began to inquire about the man's immigration status.

According to Engy Abdelkader, an attorney at the Council of Islamic-American Relations, the Jordanian had been in this country legally since 2000 or 2001 with a green card. Green card holders are required to have their cards on them at all times, but the Jordanian man was in the habit of leaving his at home for safekeeping. The law enforcement officials who picked him up refused to allow him to return to his home, several blocks away, to retrieve the card and prove his legal status. Instead, they took him to the precinct and threatened to arrest him. Finally acknowledging that he was not the Kuwaiti suspect, they released him.

A week later, Abdelkader explained, the Jordanian man came home to find a card from an FBI agent slipped in his door. When he called the number, he was asked to report alone to a meeting with the agent and a Philadelphia Police Department detective. During that meeting, he was reminded that he resembled the wanted Kuwaiti, and the officials began to question him about his mosque.

"Have you seen any airplane seats or weapons at your mosque?" Abdelkader claims they inquired of her client. "You might be in some trouble. Do you want to get married? Because we can make that difficult for you—unless you cooperate." He was asked to be a government informant. Overwhelmed, unsure of his rights, her client agreed to a follow-up meeting with the authorities.

In the interim, the Jordanian contacted the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and retained Abdelkader as his counsel. CAIR placed several calls to the FBI inquiring about their interest in the Jordanian man, but the calls

turn to RIGHTS, page 4

To the Reader:

In preparation for the approaching presidential election, THE INDEPENDENT has decided to document how life has changed under the Bush administration, both in Philadelphia and around the world. In this issue, we examine how domestic civil rights have fared during the administration's hunt for Al-Qaeda terrorists. And beginning on Page Ten is a selection of posters addressing the upcoming election. Look for more analysis of life in under Bush in our October issue, along with more posters and reports from the Republican National Convention.

The State of Civil Liberties in the United States Under the Bush Administration

If you're not an Arab, not a Muslim, not a foreign national, don't ride airplanes, and don't publicly protest the government, you're probably just as content with the state of your civil liberties as you were at the beginning of President Bush's term in office. You may not have noticed that the FBI and the Department of Justice have interviewed and detained thousands of persons of interest due to their address, name, and ethnicity, without any evidence that they had committed or were planning to commit any crime. Below is a brief tallying of new law enforcement measures under Bush, how many innocent people have been cast under suspicion, and how many guilty people have been caught.

Immediately following September 11, 2001, 762 mostly Arab suspects were arrested and held at prisons in Brooklyn and Northern New Jersey. They were "detained" under a "hold until cleared" policy, which meant being imprisoned without charges for an average of

eighty days. According to a Department of Justice (DOJ) report, some of these prisoners were beaten, shocked, slammed into walls, deprived of sleep and forced into painful stress positions for long periods.

In the two years following September 2001, the federal government referred 6,400 cases to the DOJ for possible charges of terrorism. Of these, only twenty-three have led to convictions of more than five years. There are also concerns that some of these convicts may not be terrorists. Nearly half of the terrorism-related convictions claimed by the DOJ in 2002 had nothing to do with terrorism, according to a report by the General Accounting Office.

The U.S. Army is holding 598 prisoners of war, mostly low-level Taliban fighters captured in Afghanistan, at a prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. They will be tried not by U.S. or international laws but by military tri-

turn to SECURITY, page 5

N.J.'S OLDEST MALL

Fifty Years of Shopping Where the Air Was Cold
The Prices Low & the Coal as Good as Gold

BY MEGHAN QUINN

PENNSAUKEN, N.J.—Business is slow as usual tonight at the Pennsauken Merchandise Mart. Doc Stewart, in a tan fedora with a black band, can be heard down one of the Mart's long hallways extolling the virtues of a magic carpet cleaning solution he says was seen on TV in 1996, his voice calling out to the small stream of passers-by with an air of assurance that he will reel in a few catches. But the catches are coming fewer and father between.

A few teenage girls with tank tops and shopping bags are loitering nearby. Why do they come here? "We just do," they say, already looking down the aisle for a getaway. Like most of the Mart's customers, they come because it's cheap and because it's here at the Crossroads, a tract of land at the intersection of New Jersey routes 130, 73 and 90, the same place it's been for the past half century.

The Mart is a low, long, one-story beige building that was erected in the days before consumers got used to the glass skylights and marble floors of easy-on-the-eyes retail environments. Architecturally, it resides somewhere between a farmer's market and a mall. The Mart slouches beige in the parking lot and unapologetically announces itself to the highway with ten stars perched on spindly legs and four five-foot red letters, M-A-R-T, on the roof. There is no real entrance to the Mart, only small openings for sucking in and expelling people. Inside the air is still and cavelike, cool but not blustery, a throwback to the days when cool air in the summer was a luxury. Two black concrete aisles, dotted with splashes of gum spat out by three generations of shoppers, run between rows of storefronts that are like large booths

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THIS NEWSPAPER CONTAINS

2: EDITORIAL ON INDEPENDENCE MALL, An Obituary for GRETCHEN WORDEN by JAMES TAYLOR. A call for able bodied persons to assist with the production of this newspaper.
3: A Guide to South Philadelphia, REAL CALL & the continuation of our report on the DNC.
4-5: The continuation of our three stories on CIVIL LIBERTIES and law enforcement.
6-9: METRONAUT. Continuation of MEGHAN QUINN on the PENNSAUKEN MART, a profile of the singer FRANK SINATRA by MATTHEW BRODSKY, SEPTA LETTERS, a report from Florida by AARON COMETRUS. Comics by GARY PANTER, HIROSHIMA LEMON, BEN KATCHOR & GEORGE TAUTKUS.
10-13: TO THE PUBLIC. Four pages of political posters, commencing with an Essay by JESSE GOLDSTEIN.
14-15: Continuation of BAGHDAD AND BROOKLYN LETTERS, a comic by CHRIS CAROZZO. Our usual plea for subscriptions.
16: An interview and art by JULIE DORRSET, DOMINIQUE PETUN & GENIEVE CASTREE.
17: LORD WHIMSY on Trump Aesthetics.
18-19: General Advertisements.
20: C&C. PHONE SEX DIARY & SPOTTINGS.
21-22: Forecast, Bureau of Puzzles & Games.

CITY TERROR CZAR SPEAKS

Counter-Terrorism Chief
Reveals Police Strategy
For Tracking Terrorists

"WE COULD LOSE THIS."

Free Speech Still Legal, But:
"I Don't Believe That The
Constitution is a Death Pact."

N. LIBERTIES, Phila.—Joseph O'Connor, head of the Philadelphia Police Department Counter-Terrorism Bureau, is running late. By the time the chief inspector arrived at Finnegans Wake, clad in a beige mock turtle-neck sweater, crisply pleated slacks and an olive green blazer adorned with a black 9/11 memorial pin, I had finished half my beer. It seemed that another inspector had accidentally walked off with his car keys after a meeting. Luckily, his driver had managed to rustle up a spare set.

On the phone, O'Connor likes to chat and sometimes rambles. In person, he makes a very convincing chief. His graying hair, gently spiked, defies the deep rings beneath his eyes. He wears a gold ring commemorating the twelve weeks he spent at the FBI Academy in 1993, where he studied budgeting, forensics, fingerprinting, community policing, and press relations. He is a former competitive weightlifter who smokes Pall Malls and runs three miles a day.

O'Connor served seven years in the Army before taking a job as a file clerk at the Internal Revenue Service. While waiting to be promoted to tax examiner, he saw an advertisement for police officers in the newspaper. Thirty-one years later, in 2002, after stints in organized crime intelligence, tactics and hostage negotiation, he was asked to lead a new bureau dedicated to keeping Philadelphia's 135 square miles of homeland secure.

O'Connor is very conscientious with regards to safety. When we parted, he asked if I was carrying mace and reminded me that criminals might consider a single woman alone on a bicycle to be a vulnerable target.

Christine Smallwood: Do you think there are any political motivations behind the fear of terrorism?
Joseph O'Connor: No, I don't.
CS: What do you think of Kerry and Bush? Will things change if Kerry wins the election?
JO: I don't think so. I don't think the country will be any better off if Kerry's elected; I don't think the country will be any worse off if Kerry's elected.

CS: In terms of terrorism?
JO: In terms of anything?
CS: Do you identify with a party?
JO: I'm a Democrat. I'm a row-house Catholic, that's what I am. I'm a Franklin Roosevelt Democrat. Do I think the Democratic party is in line with what has to be done? It's like anything. I think that once

turn to O'CONNOR, page 4

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EDITORIAL

On the Monuments of Liberty



The Liberty Bell in San Francisco among the people, in 1915.

The federal government makes its presence most known in a small square of Philadelphia bounded by Fourth, Seventh, Chestnut and Race streets. This is where the mint prints our money, the Federal Reserve oversees our banks, the FBI tracks down and locks up our villains, and the men and women in the wide-brimmed hats tend to our shrines. The hats are employed by the National Park Service, two or three of whom can usually be seen guarding the secured half of Independence Square, the park with the towering trees to the south of Independence Hall. To approach this hallowed ground where the Declaration of Independence was drafted and signed, a visitor must pass through a security checkpoint stationed a block away in the Liberty Bell Pavilion, where the bell itself used to rest. Even though passersby are welcome to tread on the grass lawn beside the bell's new home, most everyone sticks to the sidewalk and moves in a straight line.

The other half of Independence Square is also closed to the public; the National Park Service is in the process of repairing the parkways, drainage, lighting, and brick walls of the old park. Between the half under guard and the half under repair, all that remains of the public square is a thin pathway running east to west.

The cordoned half of Independence Square has been blocked off since September 11, 2001. For how much longer will the barricades, which also surround three sides of the Liberty Bell Center, be there? Phil Sheridan, spokesman for the National Park Service at Independence Hall, wasn't sure: "We don't know when it'll be solved. What you see is temporary." Apparently, a security measure three years old can still be called temporary.

One wonders: What would Osama bin Laden make of Independence Mall and the Liberty Bell? Would he wonder why we maintain a defunct municipal building, why we haven't melted 2,080 pounds of metal into coin or cannon? Would he try to destroy these relics for the same reasons we've fought to preserve them? Or is he even aware of them? Does he even know that the bell is cracked? If he wanted to undo the symbols of Independence Mall, would bin Laden be able to outdo the efforts of the National Park Service? The bell that bears the words "Proclaim LIBERTY throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" is hidden behind two lines of metal barricades, patrolled by rangers in and Wackenhut private security guards. For almost three years, the National Park Service said these were these were temporary measures. Then, last month, they proposed a permanent solution. The plan propos-

es continuing the practice of keeping pedestrians away from both sites, and funneling all visitors through carefully monitored lines where their bags are searched, their bodies scanned for scraps of metal, and their feet herded along fixed pathways. The plan would also divide the square behind Independence Hall with an eight-foot tall wrought-iron fence, further offending a 250-year-old state law mandating that it should remain open to the public forever. Much like the permanently temporary state of the metal fences, there is no fixed timeline for the plan. "It's not going to be two weeks or two months," said Sheridan, "but nobody wants to see this draw out to five years."

If only madmen could be deterred as easily as dogs, a fence might be in order. But the truth is that should there be anyone with moderate funds determined to blow himself up for the sake of damaging the hall or the bell, a fence will do little to stop him. The final purpose of the lockdown on Independence Mall is to teach us, by example, how to police ourselves. But to relinquish our liberties at the door of the hall where they were born is sacrilege. To do so is to alter the meaning of the monument we came to see. Rather than proclaiming liberty, the metal detectors, barricades and armed guards surrounding the bell are a monument to just how little our liberties matter to the present government. And what have they given us in return? The corpse of our forefathers' courage, embalmed and imprisoned in the tomb of our present fears.

For the past three years, the Bush administration has extended its perimeters, expanded its buffers, and established new zones of security. Protestors are isolated in cages; sympathizers are permitted closer to the presidential caravan than dissenters; every day we hear of new prohibitions, new scaffolds laid across the commons as a blueprint for new walls. What can be managed is, and what cannot be made safe is determined to not have required protection in the first place. Dictating the terms under which communities can interact with their monuments, parks and lawns, encouraging an internalization of distance, respect and solemnity, these barricades and guards deprive us of authentically experiencing our past. They have rewritten and overwritten the meaning of the mall, which stands in its present state as a monument to how brave we were once and how afraid we are now. But even naming that fear will not bring down the fences that proscribe our paths. It is the fences themselves that must come down, and soon, before we have forgotten the time before they separated us from our own history, and from our present task of remembering it for ourselves.

JOIN OUR STAFF

To apply for any of the following positions, email your resumé to editors@philadelphiaindependent.net with the relevant job title as the subject line.

DESIGNER: Assist the Art Director with designing and laying out pages, creating templates, managing workflow, designing advertisements. Experience in Quark, InDesign, MS Office, Photoshop, font management required. Basic web knowledge, copyediting skills, newspaper or magazine experience is a plus. Approx. fifteen hours a week to start with possible expansion to full-time. Low hourly wage.

NEWSIE: Assist the Circulation Bureau with the lifting and transportation of heavy newspaper. Set up new circulation points. Stout constitution, access to auto or bicycle, friendly nature and firm handshake required. Desire to sell display advertising on commission, any experience with accounting and/or databases a plus. Approx. ten to twenty hours a week. Low hourly wage, plus commission and expenses.

PUZZLE MASTER: Create puzzles and games for the eponymous bureau. Assist Mr. Floss with determining winners, settling disputes, managing correspondence with agents of the bureau. Crosswords are preferred but Mr. Floss is willing to entertain proposals for other kinds of puzzles. Will pay up to \$50 per puzzle on prompt completion.

GOVERNMENT REPORTER: Attend meetings of the zoning board, City Council, historical commission, other municipal bodies and boards. Take notes, report back to headquarters, obtain answers to follow-up questions. Some journalism experience required. This is an ideal position for an undergraduate who wants to learn more about city government. Unpaid.

from POETS page 1

have also hesitated to invest additional funds into their craft after spending \$575 on the weekend (hotel, transportation and tips not included).

Helen Fitzgerald shelled out £600 for a plane ride here from Essex, England. She sells Anne Summers lingerie to women at home, and she's never been to the U.S. before. "There's a banquet tonight with the Shirrelles and Florence Henderson," she says, "from 'The Brady Bunch.' Or was it 'The Partridge Family?'" She's hoping that she might at least win one of the runner-up prizes, which include Mexican and Caribbean vacations.

Meanwhile, Esteban Vidal, an 18-year-old from Florida who's been writing poetry since he was 13, stands near the escalator. He's reading in an hour. "I'm going for first," he says. With the \$20,000, he says he would buy a car ("probably an import") and move out to California to go to college and try to become an actor. "That's my dream," he says, "once I get rid of this little accent."

Also among the conventioners are Velma Bower and Betty Porter. "We've never been to Philadelphia before," they say, but the two women, Dunkin' Donuts cups in hand, look like they're fitting in fine. Childhood friends who are now in their 70s, they hail from the small town of Roscoe, Missouri, population

125, where they were known as the "gruesome twosome." The strange thing about the conventioners is that they don't look especially poetic. Nobody is even wearing a beret. Most of the people here say that they received an invitation from the website www.poetry.com, or that they were invited after being included in a poetry anthology. The only person who seems to really stand out is John C. Sonne, who, in a fluorescent orange hunter's cap, blue plaid shirt, green socks, leather lanyard and loafers, plays ragtime surreptitiously on the open keyboard of the covered grand piano in the corner. A ukulele rests propped up against the wall on the floor next to his tote bag.

Jeffrey H. Williams, the 1999 winner, is back again this year, selling his books of poetry, *When the Heart Speaks* and *Selections from the Heart*. Both are on special for ten dollars a piece. The third stanza of his prize-winning poem, "No Time For the Blues," goes:

While the vibes still caressed the air, the old man stood,
placed the chairs on the tables and slowly swept away

the memories of this night...
A crushed rose, a dropped match book
with a never to be called phone number,
and many unfulfilled dreams
casually discarded as yesterday's trash.
—MEGHAN QUINN

obituary

GRETCHEN WORDEN

1947 — 2004

Director of the Mutter Museum

BY JAMES TAYLOR



I could describe Mutter Museum Director Gretchen Worden, who passed away last month, as the most unforgettable person I've ever met, but the cliché would do justice neither to her nor her work. After all, she took what should have been a frightening experience for most—a museum of ghastly, horrifying, even stomach turning medical exhibits—made it not just palatable for the masses, but one of Philadelphia's best-known tourist attractions. When she began her twenty years as the museum's director in 1984, the Mutter drew fewer than 1,000 visitors a year, mostly scholars and fans of the strange, the weird, the bizarre, the odd and the unusual. Today, you'll find them waiting in line with the moms, dads, their kids and the grade school field trippers, the radio and television crews.

Apparent contradictions coupled with boundless trust, compulsion and generosity helped Gretchen cut a huge swath through so many disparate communities that it's almost impossible to number them all. She was a major museum director who loved dirty jokes, who in her prime could drink anyone under the table, who loved a business—sideshows and freak shows—that seemed so at odds with what she was trying to accomplish. The Mutter's mission, after all, is to educate visitors, not give them their money's worth in entertainment. She engineered spots on "The David Letterman Show" showcasing strange medical artifacts. She published an annual calendar featuring photos of frightening specimens from the collection and then turned those transfiguring images and into a coffee table book of medical amazement, *The Mutter Museum*. But her wry, dark and bawdy sense of humor would draw up short when you found yourself straying into "This place is sooooo weird!" territory about the museum, and she'd look you dead in the eye and remind you, "We're a medical museum, damn it!"

And it worked, every apparently contradictory part of it. Why? Because Gretchen Worden was one of the greatest showmen I've ever met. Whether she'd have ever admitted to it in those words, she knew that showmanship was necessary to make her museum (and the Mutter was, de facto, hers) the best in the world. Even though she owned any room she entered, she always made you feel that you were the reason for her being there, that but for you, she'd have no reason to be there at all. Except, of course, for the museum.

That museum—the greatest museum in the world, in my opinion—was all that really mattered to her. Now, I'm not saying that she had no other interests, that she lived/ate/breathed/slept the Mutter alone, but it was amazing how many things she dipped into that just seemed to feed back to 19 S. 22nd Street. I don't think there was a committee she sat on, a board of which she was a member, a showman she ever met who didn't know immediately that she was the director of "that" museum. True showmanship demands such presence, and she had that in spades. What she also had was a seemingly naive generosity, a giving nature—of her time, herself, and the museum artifacts—that often terrified me. Of course, she was way smarter than I was: Her time, her life, her self was the Mutter. What's not to give, when you look at it that way? As she put it to me once, she had to make herself go home every night; otherwise, she'd have worked there 'til she dropped. Her generosity—an art student getting as much attention as a fellow museum director or visiting physician—simply sold the Mutter and its educational mission more fully. Be generous with the medical profession, sure: it is the Mutter Museum. But also be generous with the public—the artists, the media, the families—and you've sold the institution and its mission in perpetuity. Now that's showmanship.

One night, after a long afternoon of her attending the phones and hosting a grade school field trip while I tried to stay out of her way, the museum was finally closed and we found ourselves alone. Anxious to get us to dinner and drinks, I was trying to hurry her out, a task at which I was failing miserably. "Do you have time to help me change a few lights?" And she smiled that huge smile. What could I say? So there I am, crawling above the showcase of a giant skeleton, the Hurler Skull Collection, the Soap Lady, stainless steel lobotomy tools, rows of wax eye models, and I'm screwing around with lights. "Yo," I reached into the dust atop the case, "what's this?" The paper, small, torn from a pad long ago, had written upon it dates going back for years. "Oh, I need that." I handed it to her. She studied it for a moment, penciled in that day's date, and handed it back. The look on my face told her I thought she'd apparently pushed attention to detail just a detail too far. "We need that," she said; "to make sure we get the bulbs with the longest life for the money." But of course. A place for everything, deary, and everything in its place.

James Taylor is the publisher of *Shocked and Amazed!*, the world's only journal devoted to sideshows, novelty and variety exhibition, which can be found online at www.shockedandamazed.com.

A City Within The City

THE SECRETS OF SOUTH PHILADELPHIA

At night, the medians fill up with cars parked back to back. Video poker machines turn up in the strangest places. Dozens vie for penny-ante political positions like "ward leader" that come with no office and little pay. Why is South Philadelphia the way it is? Why are so many prominent Philadelphians South Philadelphians? Does the mob still exist there? What is a ward, anyway? Will I ever know the secrets of South Philly? Well, the answer to that last question, at least, is no. It's too confusing. South Philly has roughly 100,000 citizens, and roughly one in three qualifies as a "character," and one in four are involved in ward politics and/or small-time gambling rackets and/or the Passyunk Cheesesteak Wars, or at the very least, sound like they're involved.



Francis Lazarro Rizzo
also known as The Big Bambino

DON'T movies—ahem, *Rocky*—that depict South Philadelphia as constituting all of Philadelphia misrepresent the rest of the city?

Actually, South Philadelphia, more than any other part of town, really is something of a demographic microcosm of the city, even though it represents a mere 7.5 percent of its population. In many ways it's a caricature of the city, since no one famous really comes from South Philly, but the famous-for-Philly types most likely to be dubbed "larger than life" (Frank Rizzo, Vince "Vince of Darkness" Fumo, Joseph "Skinny Joey" Merlino, Nicodem "Little Nicky" Scarfo, union leader John "Johnny Doc" Dougherty, rapper Beanie Sigel) all seem to have been born, raised and schooled here. According to the 2000 census, there are two ways the average South Philadelphians differ from the rest of Philly: On average, they make less money and are more likely to own the home they live in. Otherwise the statistical differences are slight: Forty-nine percent of its residents are white,

compared with forty-five percent in the rest of the city, and in many ways it mirrors Philadelphia. Almost exactly the same percentage of its residents have four-year college degrees (just over ten percent), receive welfare (around nine percent), are under 18 and over 65 (about eighteen and sixteen percent, respectively) as the rest of the city. They don't just park on the median, they are the median.

HOW Italian is South Philadelphia?

The census does not count Italians, but the exodus of Italian Americans across the river to South Jersey only seems to have extended the reach of the curiously clan-centric, dealmaking and feud-propagating culture so many associate with Italian South Philadelphia. Back within South Philadelphia lines, Asians—Vietnamese, Cambodians and Chinese—have established their own video poker, prostitution rings, gangster ties to other gangster groups in Atlantic City loosely based on the Italian models. Pho, by any other name, is just vermicelli (albeit in a

delectable beef broth). The language is different, but the ingredients are the same.

HOW mob-controlled is South Philadelphia?

Not very, in the sense that if you open a bakery you will not be shaken down for street-cleaning money. However, if your streets are clean, you will have your committeeman to thank, and your committeeman might take a few hundred here and there to convince you to vote the right way, and in exchange for those votes your committeeman (or person) might get a job for your slow cousin, and after awhile your committeeman is going to hit you up for money, and if you don't pay up it could turn into a feud whereby someone's legs get broken, and ... More often than not, however, the media depicts South Philadelphia politics as an extension of the mob because things don't seem to happen the way they should. Polling places in sections of the Second Ward that favored Sam Katz in the 1999 election sat quiet and empty in the 2003 election thanks mostly to the don't-get-out-the-vote directives of John Street supporter John Dougherty. What do South Philly voters owe to Johnny Doc, especially given that he's the archrival of arch-bringer of bacon Vince Fumo? We may never know. But rest assured local news reporters are filing Right-to-Know requests as we speak in hopes of figuring it out.

WHO is this Frank Rizzo guy, anyway?

Frank Rizzo, South Philadelphia's best-known native son, is dead, but his son is a city councilman-at-large. The late Rizzo was a high school dropout, a police commissioner, a general hater of intellectuals, homosexuals, blacks and whites of non-Italian ethnicities; a selective lover of thousands of all colors and creeds; a Republican who switched to the Democratic party and back again in the span of one political career; a tough who raided beatnik coffee houses in the 1950s for sport and according to one persistent tale, presided over cops dressed up in rabbit suits and roughed up detainees with carrot-shaped clubs to get them to cooperate with interrogations. In his tenure as police commissioner he raided Black Panther offices and invited many a police brutality accusation, but he

firebombed nary a city block, and he also took credit for preventing the devastating race riots endured by cities like Detroit and Washington D.C. Rizzo was best-known, however, for his two terms as mayor during the seventies, a period during which he posed for a picture in a tuxedo with a nightstick tucked into his cummerbund. He probably could have stayed mayor for another decade or so, but he was prohibited from running for a third term; he retreated not back to South Philadelphia but to a tony street in Chestnut Hill (South Philadelphians don't, somehow, resent this sort of slight) where rumors swirled that *on-duty* police officers spent their days on Rizzo detail working on his lawn. (When a news reporter came to his Chestnut to investigate, Rizzo threw a notably explosive-free tantrum during which he called the reporter a "lush" and a "crumb-bum") When Rizzo ran for a third term as mayor in 1991 he was largely expected to win; his death from a heart attack at age 70 in 1991 paved the way for Philadelphia's second best-known mayor Ed Rendell.

WHO ran in Rizzo's place?

Glad you asked. That would be a fellow named Joe Egan. Egan's a Republican, but he's not from South Philadelphia and no way was he going to win that election. Egan runs the Parking Authority now.

SO WHY do people park in the middle of Broad Street in South Philadelphia?

Egan says the Parking Authority doesn't have jurisdiction over South Philadelphia in areas south of Washington Avenue. "South Philly is its own world," he says. Indeed, before Philadelphia was established by William Penn, South Philadelphia existed; Philadelphia's first southern border was South Street.

Frank Galio, an aide to City Councilman Frank Rizzo (son of Rizzo I, you'll recall) agreed with a frequently floated theory that the Washington Avenue line was the result of an oral agreement Rizzo forged in the 1970s, an "understanding" that's outlasted the ban on building above Penn's head. "It's not realistic to expect people to park legally," he said, a truth that brings the Parking Authority millions of dollars of fines each year, but not a cent from the medians of South Philadelphia.

The DNC Convention

A UNITED FRONT OF UNQUESTIONING DISSENT

from DNC page 1

Party met in Atlantic City forty years ago, they weren't able to follow the script quite as closely. That's because the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was there.

In 1964, only five percent of Mississippi's blacks were registered to vote, and while the state population was forty percent black, the Democratic Party's Mississippi delegation was one hundred percent white. Local law enforcement beat, intimidated, and even killed to keep blacks out of politics and away from the voting booth. Blacks had no alternative means to power through the Republican Party, which had been nearly non-existent since Reconstruction. So a coalition of groups that had been active in registering black voters decided to form their own party, and elected sixty-eight delegates, all but four of whom were black, to crash the convention.

On arriving in Atlantic City, the group created a dilemma for Democratic President Lyndon Johnson, who feared that giving in to their demand for full delegate status would drive white Southerners to the Republicans. Johnson tried to distract the media from covering the MFDP's hearing before the convention's credentialing committee by calling an impromptu press conference, but the networks replayed the MFDP's testimony during prime time anyway. Millions of people heard Fannie Lou Hamer, a sharecropper from Ruleville, Mississippi, describe how a state policeman threw her in jail and forced two black prisoners to beat her with a blackjack for registering blacks to vote. She concluded:

All of this is on account we want to register, to become first-class citizens, and if the [MFDP] is not seated now, I question America, is this America the land of the free and the home of the brave where we have to sleep with our telephones off the hooks because our lives be threatened daily because we want to live as decent human beings, in America? Thank you.

The national party offered a compromise that would grant two members of the MFDP delegate status, seat the rest as honored guests, create a commission to ensure that all future state delegations would be integrated and require that Mississippi's all-white Democratic delegation sign an oath promising to support the Democratic nominee, presumably Johnson, against Goldwater. The White House issued a statement claiming that the MFDP had accepted the compromise, but according to the MFDP, they turned it down. In Hamer's words, "We didn't come all this way for no two seats." The all-white Mississippi delegation walked out with only a handful of their delegates signing the oath to Johnson. Although the party had refused to accept them, the MFDP delegates entered the convention hall. This failed compromise radicalized activists who witnessed the MFDP's thwarted attempt to work within the party, and helped set the stage for the anti-war protests of the 1968 Chicago DNC.

But every powerful institution must co-opt and integrate dissent, erasing any memory that things have ever been another way, even if it takes thirty or forty years. On Tuesday night, the second night of the 2004 convention, the Democrats honored the anniversary of the MFDP and Fannie Lou Hamer. I sat between New Jersey and Delaware as actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dees presented together, taking turns reading off the teleprompter. They could have been awarding the Best Actress in a Supporting Role, except they were speaking about the brutal realities of 1960s Mississippi. Few on the floor were listening. The lack of interest was not usual at that hour; every convention speaker scheduled before 8 p.m. had to compete for attention. "Hey, I wanna hear this," a young black man scolded his chatty neighbors, as the main screen displayed 1964 footage of Hamer. Interest from the floor increased dramatically when Maya Angelou came out—three mid-20s white girls next to me burst into sustained applause and several Oh-my-God-it's-Maya-Angelou screams.

Angelou offered these words: "In the sequestered most private heart of every American lives a burning desire to belong to a great country, to represent a noble minded country where ... the dream of democracy is not in sole possession of the strong." As she spoke, the video screens ringing the Fleet center above the luxury boxes flashed the phrase they displayed all four days: the DNC logo and the words "A STRONGER AMERICA." The memorial praised "Fannie Lou Hamer's single decision," spoke of the fact that "she knew she was only one

woman," remembered "her single voice," and made hardly any mention of the MFDP, except as something she "co-founded." Granted, the memorial was officially for Fannie Lou Hamer and not for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. But Hamer's "little light which she shined upon the darkness" (Angelou's words) would have still been in Ruleville, were it not for the student activists who first approached her, the thousands of blacks who elected her as a delegate, the sixty-seven other MFDP delegates who rode with her to the convention and the MFDP's lawyer and other advisors. Hamer was utterly alone when she withstood the beatings in the rural Mississippi jail, but it was only by being part of a movement made up of thousands of people risking their lives that she made it from that cell to Atlantic City. At 2004's well-scripted and "unified" convention, even the boldest convention handler would be hesitant to emphasize the exploits of a group of citizens who heroically formed an alternative to the Democratic Party. Better to focus on a single heroic woman. The official memorial ended with a recreation of the previous night's September 11 memorial: the lights were dimmed and a third of the

delegates held aloft tiny lights while a choir sang "This Little Light of Mine," a gospel song popularized by Hamer. Forty years time has made Hamer's critique of the party not only safe, but something to celebrate. The Democratic Party is now dependent on black women, ninety-five percent of whom voted for Al Gore in 2000, making up eleven percent of his total. In several Southern states, more blacks than whites voted for Gore. Thirty-nine percent of the 2004 delegates were minorities, more than at any previous DNC. Registration patterns have grown more equal as well—only two percent fewer blacks than whites registered to vote in 2000, and only three percent fewer voted.

But there is something worth remembering about the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, something that was left out of the DNC program. The MFDP forced a question that the Democrats had to answer—where should these people sit—and that, by answering, would necessarily alienate a large segment of their base. Because this year's delegates checked their dissent at the Fleet Center's doors, Kerry was able to avoid any such question. Like Goldwater driving Johnson to reject the MFDP, and terrorists scaring Americans into rallying behind President Bush following September 11th, so Kerry parlayed fear of a second Bush term into the perfect, unbroken front.

Nowhere to be found was Hamer's real legacy of boldly divisive action and nonviolent confrontation. Howard Dean and his delegates were visible, but only softly and indirectly challenged a candidate who failed to represent so many of their priorities. Dean took his twenty-minute slot, joking wryly about preferring to speak on Thursday night, and his delegates wore shirts with quips like "I see Dean people." Dennis Kucinich's sixty-eight delegates matched the MFDP delegation in number and he did the most to keep the heat on Kerry, but he released his troops several days before the final nominating vote. Forty-five stayed with Kucinich; the remainder backed Kerry. His organization also distributed anti-war stickers and pink scarves that said "Delegate for Peace." Tim Carpenter, the former deputy campaign director for the Kucinich campaign, was in the convention headquarters when one of the Kerry handlers suggested that armbands should be removed because "they are not fire retardant."

All the real protest was kept out of the convention hall and behind two fences. I visited the Freedom of Speech Zone on Thursday night, several hours before Kerry was scheduled to speak. The scene was desolate. An old P.A. system was broadcasting "We Shall Overcome" in a repeating loop. A few signs and papers littered the concrete. Most of the hundred or so protesters had left the "Protest Pen" for a parallel street near one of the heavily fenced delegate entrances and were busy confronting a Veterans Against Kerry contingent, engaging in dueling chants of "Bush Lied, People Died" and "Kerry Lied, People Died." A woman pressed herself up against the fence and in a half-moan, half-chant called for an end to the war in Iraq. Two young suits with delegate credentials swinging from their necks left the security line about thirty meters from the Zone and came toward the woman. "You are being heard. You are being heard. People are listening," they reassured her through the fences. The woman, oblivious, continued her soft chant.

Ian Huntington lives in Boston. He can be reached via email at iandarin@boston.com



A television reporter on the convention floor.

ROLL CALL

How Your Elected Representatives Voted

CASHING OUT (HR 3574):

Following several years of corporate scandals, the Financial Accounting Standards Board proposed a mandate that the true cost of employee stock options be included in company financial statements, in order to provide shareholders with the true cost of compensation packages. But some companies, especially small start-ups or tech firms who use stocks in lieu of high salaries, argue that there is no scientific way to value options. HR 3574, which is currently making its way through the Senate, would limit writing off stock options to the five most highly compensated executive officers and exempt small businesses and private companies from writing them off until three years after an initial public offering.

OIL PRODUCTION (HR 4517):

HR 4517 gives the Department of Energy the authority to decide where oil refineries will operate. It does away with both the Department of Environmental Protection's and individual state environmental agencies' ability to deny permits for the construction and expansion of refineries in certain communities. Instead, it gives the Secretary of Energy the final word on environmental permits in "Refinery Revitalization Zones." Any area that has experienced mass layoffs at a manufacturing facility or any area that has an idle refinery can be declared one of these zones, so long as its unemployment is twenty percent higher than the national average.

GAY MARRIAGE (HR 3313):

The Defense of Marriage Act allows some states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states. HR 3313 prohibits all federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, the right to hear cases related to the interpretation of this clause. Throughout American history, the Supreme Court has settled conflicts regarding the interpretation of federal statutes and traffic between states. This bill denies the possibility of such judicial review. Instead of having one reading on the clause, each state's own Supreme Court could issue a different interpretation, resulting in a chaos of rulings on the transference of the legality of same-sex marriages across state lines.

DEFENSE SPENDING (HR 4613):

According to a speech by Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), the FY 2002 Defense Appropriations Act contained \$3.7 billion in pork. The FY 2003 defense budget contained over \$4 billion. This year, the total pork in the proposed appropriations act came to \$8.9 billion, including \$3.5 million for sleep deprivation research, \$1 million to repair Alaska's Biathlon Trail, \$110 million for a fleet of F-15 planes, after the Air Force has already decided to replace the F-15s with F-22s, and \$1.9 million for the Lewis & Clark bicentennial celebration. The final bill included \$25 billion for emergency appropriations in Iraq and Afghanistan, \$1.7 billion of which was earmarked for classified programs.

THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JAMES GREENWOOD (R): This year, Greenwood was one of the pharmaceutical industry's biggest congressional critics. Then he resigned in late July to chair the Biotechnology Industry Association. The new job will pay him \$650,000 a year, more than four times his old salary.

Summary of Bill or Resolution	Votes: Aye, Nay, Absent					Result	Status
CASHING OUT (HR 3574): Requires CEOs and executives of investment companies to report stock options in their annual reports. Allows some options to be deducted as an expense on tax returns.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 312-11	Received in Senate for debate.
OIL PRODUCTION (HR 4517): Increases cabinet authority and provides incentives for building more oil refineries in the United States.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 239-192	Referred to Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.
BACK TO WORK (HR 444): Establishes a Personal Recemployment Accounts Grant Program to assist Americans returning to work.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 213-203	Referred to Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.
FREE TRADE WITH MOROCCO (HR 4842): Reduces and eliminates trade and investment barriers between the U.S. and Morocco as part of the Bush Administration's attempt to establish a Middle East Free Trade Area by 2013.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 323-99	Became public law.
GAY MARRIAGE (HR 3313): Denies the federal courts the jurisdiction to rule on whether states are required to recognize same-sex marriages legalized in other states.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 233-194	Passed House.

THE UNITED STATES SENATE

ARLEN SPECTER (R) Pa.: The four-term incumbent Specter will face Democratic Rep. Joseph Hoeffel in the general election this November. Hoeffel, who trails slightly in the polls, is touring of every one of Pennsylvania's sixty-seven counties to reach out to voters statewide.

Summary of Bill or Resolution	Votes: Aye, Nay, Absent					Result	Status
DEFENSE SPENDING (HR 4613): Outlines Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 budget for the Department of Defense, including \$4 trillion for an Iraq Freedom Fund, \$2 trillion of which is for classified programs.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 98-0	In conference with the House.
GRIEVING (S.Res.373): Resolution expressing sympathy to the family of Ronald Reagan upon his death and appointing a committee, consisting of all the members of the Senate, to attend his funeral.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 98-0	Agreed.
PEACE PROCESS (S.Res.393): Resolution expressing support for a U.S. policy of peace in the Middle East, and affirming the Senate's commitment to establishing a separate Palestinian state.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 95-3	Agreed.
FREE TRADE WITH MOROCCO (S.2677): Reduces and eliminates trade and investment barriers between the U.S. and Morocco as part of the Bush Administration's attempt to establish a Middle East Free Trade Area by 2013.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	PASSED 85-13	Became public law.
DISCLOSURE (S.Amdt.3485): Amends S.2400, the bill authorizing FY05 DOD funding, to direct the Attorney General to submit all Department of Justice documents on the treatment and interrogation of individuals in U.S. custody to the Senate.	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	thumbs up	FAILED 46-50	Rejected.

Where Are Your Papers?

from RIGHTS page 1

were not returned.

A week later, the Jordanian received a letter from Special Agent William Riley of the Department of Homeland Security, summoning him to the 5th floor of 1600 Callowhill Street at 9 a.m. on Monday, July 12 to meet with Special Agent Mark Olexa. To the agent's surprise, he arrived with Abdelkader, she recalled.

"The immigration agent was completely surprised [to see me]," she explained. "I think that if I wasn't there he would have asked a completely different set of questions. I said listen, it's already been determined that he's not this individual [the Kuwaiti]. What has this to do with his immigration status? You have his green card. Why are we here?"

And then he said he needed an extra fingerprint, something completely bogus, and that was it. They left and he hasn't been bothered since."

Olexa said that that he was unable to comment to the media. Calls to his supervisor were not returned. Chief Inspector Joseph O'Connor of the Philadelphia Police Department's Counter-Terrorism Bureau was unable to recall the case.

On September 11, 2001, Philadelphia resident Nabil Ayesh pulled up to a stop sign outside a police station in Upper Darby. Ayesh, a Palestinian, struck an officer as suspicious, and he was detained, jailed and transferred in the middle of the night to the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York.

According to attorney Sally Baraka, who helped coordinate Ayesh's legal assistance, the authorities there determined that Ayesh was none other than Osama bin Laden. After one year and twenty-five days in jail, over which time it was determined that he was not, in fact, Osama bin Laden, Ayesh was released. His wife and children had already been deported, and his van, full of construction tools, had been confiscated and auctioned off.

In late April 2003, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that Ayesh had been arrested again in upstate New York. According to the article, Ayesh was a passenger in a car pulled over for speeding. The officers were not satisfied with the documents he pro-

duced, and put him back in jail.

Stefan Presser, Ayesh's counsel, told the *Inquirer* that Israel had decided to accept his return. He was deported, Baraka said, and has not been heard from since.

Marwan Kreidie, executive director of the Arab American Development Council, said that while the local Arab community enjoys a good relationship with the Philadelphia Police Department and the FBI, immigration is "a different story."

Immigration attorney Anser Ahmed agreed.

"They arrest anyone they think is suspicious. They've taken a power-hungry approach—they're doing it, they're getting away with it, nobody seems to mind. If you're going to deport people, deport everybody. Don't just focus on certain groups."

On September 11, 2002, an Arab American family was eating lunch at the Macaroni Grill in Willow Grove. While they waited, they took advantage of the crayons on the table to doodle on the restaurant's paper tablecloths. The father, unhappy with a local strike, drew a yellow school bus. Someone else, perhaps the 80-year old grandmother at the table, drew an airplane.

Several days later, the FBI paid a visit to the family's house. The family believes a Macaroni Grill employee reported their credit card to local police, who then passed it on to the FBI. Kreidie, who sent letters to the Macaroni Grill on the family's behalf, "didn't want to make a big stink about it." But, he added, "We should have."

Malia Brink, staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania, said Muslims in the United States are often hesitant to speak out publicly about perceived infringements of their rights. "They're a hard nut to crack," she said. "They think if they keep quiet, if they cooperate, it will blow over."

Brink said she believed that law enforcement officials are not just profiling members of the Arab American community, but targeting them. "There is more prosecution for minor offenses," she explained. "Those things are very disconcerting ... It's as though they want to get any conviction on this person so they can never come back to the United States."



Chief Inspector Joseph O'Connor at his office in Frankfurt.

"WE SHOULD BE PREPARED."

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CITY'S TERROR CZAR

from O'CONNOR page 1

they become privy to the information that the guy in the White House has, they're going to have to respond in a similar fashion. Many people say, "Gee, I'm glad Gore wasn't in office when this happened." But I don't think Gore could have responded any differently than the way this president responded.

CS: Including what's happened with Iraq?

JO: I don't know enough about Iraq, but in terms of 9/11, with regard to striking Afghanistan, I don't think we had a choice. With regard to Iraq, again—I'm one of those people, I believe in the government. Do I think that people sometimes lie? Yeah, I do. But do I think that he just wanted to go into Iraq for ...? No. I think that he had what he felt was credible information to do what he had to do. The problem, as it turns out, the information wasn't as credible as he thought it was. It didn't have the credibility that maybe should have been a standard before he did anything. I'm not the president. I don't know what information he got that prompted him to do that. I don't believe that it's a big conspiracy, I don't believe they did it for oil.

CS: What kinds of standards does the police force use to make sure the information you're getting is credible?

JO: Well, we take all information, whether it's

credible or not. So you have reliability factors. If you're building a group of informants, you may get one that's going to give you excellent information. And based on that excellent information you're able to develop something, whether it's a base, an alert, identification of a certain entry point for whatever it might be, narcotics, unpacked cigarettes. Now, once you've done that, once you've got that, this guy has given you credible information. "Your standard of reliability might be first unknown, if you're using him for the first time. But if you've used him maybe three times, and it's proven to be valid information ..."

CS: How do you go about preventing terrorism on a daily basis?

JO: Well, I don't prevent it. My job is to oversee the day-to-day activities of our detectives, and to liaison with the FBI, state police and other agencies, law enforcement types. I also oversee the outreach program to the business community at large. We talk to community groups and civic groups with regard to terrorism and the identification of factors that could lead a person to think that they might be seeing something that might be terrorist-related. We work closely with the Secret Service to protect dignitaries that come in. And we work organized crime, the traditional people: biker gangs, black organizations that have started up with regards to illegal activities, things along those lines.

CS: What is it like to work in a preventative capacity? How is preventing an attack different from solving a crime that's already occurred?

JO: The whole purpose of prevention is to have the community alert our uniformed patrol with regards to specific indicators that might tell us that there may be something afoot. Information gives us the tools to further conduct an investigation, and based on those findings, identify whether or not organizations or groups of people are financing terrorist groups, and also whether or not they're proselytizing with regards to anti-western sentiment and things along those lines.

CS: Does that mean that you depend heavily on citizens?

JO: Oh, absolutely.

CS: How many calls do you get?

JO: It depends on what might be going on and the awareness level of the public at large. Shortly after the attack on 9/11, there were numerous calls.

CS: How many is numerous?

JO: Oh, you'd get anywhere from 100 to 150 a day with regard to terrorists. But then, like anything, complacency sets in. I don't want people to panic, but I think people should be concerned. I think people should report anything they see in their day to day that's unusual or suspicious.

CS: How many calls a day do you get now?

JO: Uh ... it varies. There aren't a lot. As far as tips and phone calls from the citizenry at large, they've dwindled. But we still continue to get tips.

CS: Is the information usually useful or is it a lot of bunk?

JO: You have to understand, any information, regardless of how non-specific it might be, once it's conjoined with other information that not just necessarily my bureau has, but certainly the JTTF, the Joint Terrorism Task Force has, it may provide a key with regard to a puzzle. Any information that people see of an unusual or a suspicious nature they give us, we follow up to a logical conclusion. We take it as far as it can go.

CS: I'm an average Philadelphian. How can I help prevent terrorism?

JO: What you can do is be conscious and alert to your surroundings, and anything of a suspicious or unusual nature that you see. Don't be fearful or think that somebody will think you're goofy for calling it in. Always call it in.

CS: How can I know if it's suspicious or not?

JO: Well, it's not up to me. I don't live in the neighborhoods. I don't ride the bus down Broad Street, so I don't know what people riding that bus down Broad Street might see that's unusual.

CS: What do you make of the complaints that some of the measures the government has taken since September 11th are excessive?

JO: That's one of the human cries that goes up with regard to anything that's done with regard to anybody from the Middle East. Now, you could be flip or you could be curt and say, well, wasn't it excessive that the twin towers were hit by two planes? Wasn't it excessive that Nick Berg's head was chopped off? Wasn't it excessive that Daniel Pearl's head was chopped off? With regard to excessive, I'm not saying that all Muslims are that extreme, but people from that part of the world are that extreme with regard to what excessive is. Regardless of whether that person turns out to be a terrorist, it's nowhere near as excessive as it would be if the positions were reversed. When it comes down to it, I don't believe that the Constitution is a death pact. I believe that the Constitution should be adhered to as much as possible, and the freedoms that we enjoy and that we extend to others who are not even citizens—in order for us to survive in this day and age, there has to be a point where we say, okay, these are guarantees afforded under the Constitution. However, public safety and life and the destruction of our way of life have to be addressed appropriately. Otherwise we can all be holding hands, talking about rights. People from that segment of the religion Islam, they don't believe in human rights as we do. They believe that everything stems from the holy Koran and that's how it should be throughout the world, not just their part. Their goal is to convert.

Now, let's say our terrorists were all Irish Catholics. And they were moving out from Belfast and we figured they wanted to take over New York City. Now, would we be stopping Middle Easterns? African Americans? No. People that have Irish surnames and looked Irish? Sure we would. And that's not to say that we only do Middle Eastern people, because their recruiting has moved on. They recruit people from North Africa, Hispanics, white Americans.

CS: What's the future of the Counter-Terrorism Bureau? Are we going to have it forever?

JO: I think it will be a permanent part of the police department. I think we're going to live with it. *turn to O'CONNOR, page 5*

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from O'CONNOR page 4

under this threat of attack for many years to come, and I think that the federal and state funding for such a unit is there. The biggest enemy that this country could have would be complacency with regards to a stalled attack. People from that part of the world, their idea of time is completely different from the Western idea of time. Whether it's one year, ten years, they don't care.

We could lose this. It won't matter to me, because I'll be dead. It's not anything that's going to happen in the next twenty years. But over a period of time, we could all be converted to Islam or end up paying some sort of a tax, as is done in that part of the world, if you're not a Muslim.

CS: This last month the Department of Homeland Security briefly changed the threat level from yellow to orange. What do you do differently when that happens? Does your job change?

JO: The FBI—with whom we enjoy a very strong and very open relationship—they made it a point to contact me directly and let me know there was no specific threat to Philadelphia. And that's important, because in the past when they elevated it to orange, the strain on city finances to appropriately address that level was staggering.

CS: Malia Brink, an ACLU attorney, told me that since 9/11, the police and the district attorneys have been prosecuting offenses that had previously not been prosecuted, in an attempt to get people out of the country who may or may not pose a threat. Is that true?

JO: There are crimes that were once considered maybe under the wire that are now being pursued and prosecuted. The most common are the coupon scams and baby formula scams. There are food scams, where they buy food that's outdated or they steal it out of warehouses where it's to be destroyed, and they distribute it in various stores, changing the mark-ups on them. These are crimes that are considered to be low level. These crimes do seem not heinous at all, but they are in fact providing funds for terrorist groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah and Al Qaeda.

CS: So I've been reading about Mohamed Ghorab, the Egyptian imam in East Frankford who's been detained. Would the IRS have cared about his taxes if he weren't a Muslim cleric?

JO: I believe they would have, yes. But you have to understand it's a very difficult line when you start looking at religious institutions. And you have to bear in mind that unlike Judaism and Christian sects, Islam has no hierarchy. The exception would be, of course, Shiites, who do have a hierarchy. But the Sunni Muslims—if I'm a learned person and I know the Koran, I can become an imam and we can set a mosque up in a rowhome. It's only a matter of how many come to pray and who leads the prayers. All an imam is—he's not a priest, he's not considered a rabbi.

CS: That's very democratic.

JO: It's democratic to the point where they do not believe in the secularization of government. They believe that all governments, and all life, should be based on the law of the Koran. Their basic premise is that we have the Koran, and it's the word of God; all law should be based upon that. As a people, as an area of the world, they were never exposed to the Western thought processes with regard to Reformation, with regard to Enlightenment and things along those lines. In a sense, their development along those lines is similar to children. That occurred because in those countries, social services were provided by the religious. And along with those social services came a period of indoctrination with regard to the Koran. This religious indoctrination carried through into their formative years, and they are true believers. They believe those things.

CS: It must be a very difficult thing to battle, when you're dealing with someone's faith.

JO: What's difficult is you have people who have come up from early childhood, and at your age I'm sure you can remember many of your formative years with regards to your religious teachings or principles that you were brought up in. The difference lies in, as time evolves, you were probably encouraged to think independently. As a people, in that part of the world, they're not encouraged to do that.

CS: Can you give me any examples of the JTTF preventing an attack in Philadelphia?

In late May, dozens of federal agents raided the Ansaar Allah Islamic Society and the home of the mosque's imam, Mohamed Ghorab, looking for bank and financial records. Ghorab, who was in the United States on an expired visa, was ordered deported last year. He was awaiting appeal at the time of his arrest. According to his attorney, Anser Ahmad, the authorities have not yet found any incriminating evidence in the files they confiscated. Ahmad's biggest concern is the treatment Ghorab has received in prison. While leading prayers for other inmates in mid-August, Ghorab failed to respond when a guard called his first name. He has since been moved to solitary confinement for a period of sixty days. As of late August, he has been in prison for nearly three months and has still not been charged with a crime.

Civil Liberties Under the Bush Administration

from SECURITY page 1

bunals, and some face possible execution if found guilty.

Under the U.S. Patriot Act, the federal government can infiltrate, wiretap and investigate political and religious groups without any evidence of wrongdoing. Late last month, *The New York Times* reported that these powers are being applied not just to mosques and immigrants but to protesters preparing for the Republican National Convention. Under the Patriot Act, anyone who breaks any local, state or federal law while putting a human life in danger—hanging a sign off the side of a bridge, for example—could be charged with domestic terrorism. If the president decides a U.S. citizen is a threat to national security, he can hold them indefinitely without charges and try them under the military laws being used at Guantánamo, a power currently under review by the Supreme Court.

Between September 2001 and December 2003, the Department of Homeland Security registered and interviewed 177,260 foreign visitors from the Middle East and South Asia, and visited many from time to time to

verify where they were and what they were doing. Of these, 13,799 were deported and 2,870 were imprisoned. (Since September 2001, the government has been allowed to close deportation hearings to all outside observers for any case deemed to be "of special interest.") As of December 2003, twenty-three foreign visitors were still being held, not one of whom had been charged with a terrorism-related crime.

Due to public outcry, the Department of Homeland Security scrapped its proposed Operation TIPS system, which would have recruited more than 1 million utility employees, mail carriers, and other workers with access to private homes to report on their customers and employees. But the department is following through with its MATRIX program, which maintains a list of the 120,000 U.S. residents with the highest "terrorist factor," a quotient calculated from a combination of age, gender, race, credit history, past addresses, known relations to pilots, and other publicly available information. Of the thirteen state governments that were originally participating in the program, Pennsylvania is one of five still signed on.

people in similar positions, both federal and state, had similar concerns. It spoke volumes that we were able to, as a country, get him in, do his presentation, and get him safely back to his home country. Karzai is Al Qaeda's number two target.

CS: What did you do to keep him safe?

JO: We did what you see happening in New York City right now. We had to extend the perimeter, the inner perimeter.

CS: So you prepared a certain zone that would be safe, a buffer zone.

JO: To ensure that we'd have a route that we can safely bring him in. And once inside, the other precautionary measures with regard to vehicles that were being placed underground, the department had it, and we could call in assistance from the state police, because it's very tiring for bomb dogs to work. They're only good for a certain period of time and then they have to rest.

CS: So can we expect that something will eventually happen in Philadelphia?

JO: I won't say that we can expect something will happen in Philadelphia. I think we should be prepared, and part of my job is to ensure that our officers have sufficient training to respond, that there's sufficient communication between the first responders, and that we have the contacts to get the state and federal resources that we need should such an attack occur. And do I expect one in six months, a year? Anything can happen. And again, I don't say that in a cavalier manner, but I believe that we have established in Philadelphia sufficient safeguards to interdict, and sufficient intelligence resources that we'll be able to identify those that might have that plan down the road.

CS: Can you estimate how many people have been detained as suspicious in the past couple of years?

JO: I really can't. We've detained a number, we've interviewed many. We've had a number of incidents where they had all the earmarks of preliminary surveillance. Their planning can go on for years. I have a very hard time believing that people just want to videotape traffic patterns. If you're asking me, I think they're all involved. Even though they may be innocent. Let's say that you're on vacation in Philadelphia. And you're a college student or a housewife or just a single person who's out to see the sights. What's to prevent me as a terrorist from approaching you and saying, "Listen, Christine, I would like to get some pictures of the Liberty Bell. I would like to get some of the traffic patterns in and around City Hall. And I'm going to give you a video camera and some videotapes, and here's a couple hundred dollars, too."

CS: Does that happen?

JO: How do we know? I think it will happen. You're asking me if it's happened? I can't point to one specific instance and say that it has happened, but I think that we would be kidding ourselves if we didn't think that it did happen.

—CHRISTINE SMALLWOOD



COMMERCE
Via Bicycle

One August day, I accompanied a friend in search of a bicycle to the outdoor selection at Ninth Street's Via Bicycles. A gangly gentleman emerged from the cavern of grease and tools to offer his help. We inquired about gears and aluminum and handlebars, repairs and costs and general terms. Helpful and considerate, he explained that my Schwinn Caliente, which I had brought in the week prior with a flat front tire, was a good compromise between speed and relaxed comfort. The ride is cushier, and laid back. Pleased to have my bicycle remembered, I agreed that my ride is indeed cushy. No purchase was made.

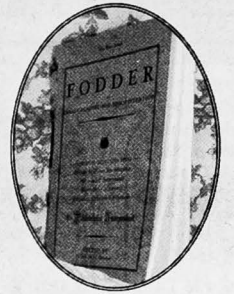
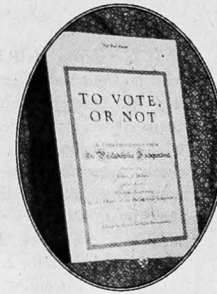
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The Septa Letters

I WRITE TO STRANGERS ON THE TRAIN

BY LIZ RYWELSKI

10. #36 TROLLEY TO 43RD &
BALTIMORE AVENUE, 2:00 P.M.

It was sunny. I had just bought a pair of purple sandals from the Salvation Army at 22nd and Market. I took the trolley, for the first time in a long time, to a picnic in Clark Park. I was wearing the best outfit for the day: a white tennis skirt, trunk sale sunglasses, and a white t-shirt with Black Flag's four stripes filled with the Louis Vuitton pattern. I love the single window seats on the trolley, the stop and go, stop and go movement.

Sitting. I found myself staring at this guy's arm. It looked like my uncle's arm, with a thick cuff of muscle right below the elbow. I wondered if I knew him or if his grandparents or great grandparents once knew mine. I could not see his face, but I watched him from six seats behind. We were both facing west as Clark Park came up on the left, he on the north side of the trolley, I on the south. On a small placement card I wrote: "You are pretty, please write me, Liz_space1026@yahoo.com." I prepared for my stop and then walked up to him, touching his hand with the card. I did not look at his face as he took the letter from me. I wanted to tell him to answer me, but instead I walked off the trolley without looking back.

A few days later he wrote:

Hello,
This is Mike. I got a note from you on the trolley last Saturday asking for a letter. So I'm writing one ...
Hi. So you are a member at 1026. I

used to live with Courtney, now I live around the corner from her. I'm not so sure what to include in a letter such as this. I've never received one like it before. I'm not even convinced it wasn't a joke, but I figured what the hell. But regardless, thanks for telling me I am pretty. That made me smile. I remember thinking you were pretty too. Write me back if you like.
—Mike

REPLY FROM EPISODE # 9:

Below is a reply from the guy who was reading *The Art of War* that ran in the last installment of *The Septa Letters*.

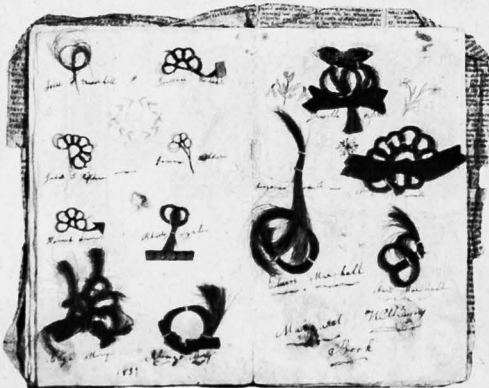
I guess I will start with you had a smile on my face the entire trip home. I live in Port Richmond in a home that I am rehabilitating. A lot of work to do but also a lot of fun. So, I assume you live in the city. What line of work are you in? I work in the Finance and Mortgage industry. Fun, fun and more fun ... actually it is a very fulfilling position. Well, I am glad you handed me that note and I look forward to hearing back from you ... until then have a great weekend!!!

Talk to you ...
Chad

Liz Rywelski lives in Philadelphia. She can be reached via email at liz_space1026@yahoo.com.

time machine
The Soft Locks of Friendship

LEAFING THROUGH LOVE'S GROOMED STRANDS



Margaret Williams Hair Album, Library Company of Philadelphia

Many young women kept friendship books in the 19th century. Most started off as commercially produced blank books, which were then circulated among friends, each person inscribing a personal message or poem in their best and most flowery handwriting. But Margaret Williams has her friends add an unusually personal touch, borrowing from the age-old post-mortem practice of clipping a lock of hair from the head of the dearly departed. The locks in Margaret's book don't represent friends who died in their youth, but they do represent individuals she may often have been separated from, and whose companionship she longed for and cherished. Consider this stanza from a period poem entitled "At Parting":

So, with a last good-bye
In this grey hour you die
To us, as we to you;
Parting is dying too,
And distance, heart to heart despairing
saith,
Is but a name for death.

Image courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Words by Kim Massare.

The pieces of hair extracted from her very best friends were arranged in circular patterns and sewn neatly into the small book, which was bound with newsprint that has been dated from 1838. Some locks are decorated with tassels, some with black or brown ribbon, and all the pages are decorated, either with tiny gold leaf collages or watercolor flowers. It seems as though Margaret preferred the company of brunettes to blondes, or even to redheads for that matter. Hair samples for whole families are represented on some pages, like the Underhills—James, Jesse, Prudence, Mary Ann, Phebe and Perlina; and the Marys—Smith, Lea, Joseph, Deborah, Martha, Stephan, Rachel, and yes, Mary Mary. Morgan S. Washburn, Cornelia Halden and Emily McIntyre are among those who appear in the book without siblings. Margaret Williams's hairbook currently resides at the Library Company of Philadelphia, located at 1314 Locust Street, which also has a lock of George Washington's hair stored in its collections.

from MART page 1

with no front wall. They are named for what they sell: Bike Shop, Shoe Repair, Computer Store. Above, the wooden beams in the slightly sloping ceiling are covered by thin metal sheets, many of which are loosening at the bolts and peeling down like bark. And while all the Green Garden Company's flowers are made from dyed fabric, the smell of eucalyptus fills the air around the entrance.

Outside, a neon 'M' stands atop an eighty-foot mast with wires of lights trailing down like ribbons on a maypole. A person driving along any of the three highways cradling the Mart might see the M and have a rush of nostalgia for the old days, popscapes, and childhood in a suburban America when even malls seemed somehow simpler. A person might see the boarded-up beige buildings, washed up around the Mart like sand in a delta or the Coastal gas station that closed when regular unleaded was still \$1.77, and think about what a shame it is that places like the Mart aren't around anymore, that these places just couldn't survive.

A person would think this until they saw all the cars in the parking lot. Because somehow, the Mart did survive, almost fully occupied, without anyone seeming to notice.

Then the developers, politicians and the politico-developers noticed. George Norcross III, the near-omnipotent insurance tycoon and former Camden County Democratic Party chairman, had been looking for a home for his South Jersey Hockey LLC, the as-yet-unnamed minor league team in a minor league sport he and a partner had acquired. After bad publicity and resistance from Lawnside and Gloucester Township residents, Norcross sold his share in the team and added a civic center and entertainment center to his plans for the team's home. The Crossroads was selected because of its accessible location and the fact that it is a politically "smarter" site than the little wilderness that remains in South Jersey. The entire project will cost an estimated \$50 million, \$24.2 million of which will come from casino profits and the rest from floated bonds. Despite resistance from Mart merchants, Mart owner Elliott Kattan sold the Mart lot to the Camden County Improvement Association in May for \$13.2 million, and the site is scheduled to be cleared sometime this fall.

But for now, as a sign on the building's wall declares, the Mart is "Still Here (At Least) Another Year." Still, the shopping public doesn't seem to realize that the Mart remains open. Kerry Yobb, owner of the Gold Emporium who heads the Mart merchant's association, says business "has been down by fifty percent. It was even up to eighty percent, but it's fifty percent now, sometimes increasing to fifty, sixty, eighty." In February, Camden County agreed to rent a white halogen-lit blimp to float overhead, bearing the message "OPEN" at the end of the Mart, close to the highway. Unfortunately, the idea was shot down. "Someone shot down the blimp within four hours," Yobb says. "Some kids with paintball guns put five holes in it." The injured blimp is due back from its California manufacturer any day, but for now the skies over the Crossroads remain empty.

The Mart was built by an entrepreneur, a lawyer and a grocer in 1955, as developers were blanketing America's first suburbs with asphalt and concrete to build room for returning World War II soldiers. It featured 103 shops, a parking lot for "8,500 automobiles" and a catchy slogan: "Only five miles, five minutes, and five cents from the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge." The Camden County Courier dubbed it the "modern day supercounterpart to the old square farmers' market." The Mart was such a quick success that within three months the partners lengthened the building by three hundred feet. It was the beginning of a golden era in American retailing.

"We sold one dollar bills for fifty cents and people were skeptical at first, but soon understood that it was just another way of dazzling them with footwork," remembers Sandy Wizov, who worked at the Mart from 1956 until 1992. "We sprayed coal with gold paint and dabbed some 'nuggets' with a substance

that glowed under a black light."

Wizov recently completed an 11,000-word history of the Mart's fifty years, making him the foremost authority on the subject. He started behind a drawing board in a clothes closet, designing advertisements and Mart circulars. In 1975, he became the general manager and advertising director, often putting in fourteen and fifteen hour days, with his own

above the law, it seemed. Rather than obeying a Pennsauken blue law prohibiting businesses from opening on Sundays, the Mart opted to pay a weekly fine. Sunday became the most successful day of the week at the Mart, at least until the rise of televised football. Eventually, the Mart was strong enough to get the laws repealed.

Through the years, businesses sprouted up

Improvement Authority began eyeing the Mart as an attractive site for "Smart Growth"—that is, Norcross's civic center project. The Mart, the CCIA proposed, could move to Camden. Camden, the Mart countered, could also be an ideal site for "smart growth." The CCIA won—though not entirely. The Mart will not move to Camden, but instead be relocated to a site nine miles north in Willingsboro.

The new Mart will exist at a closed-down strip mall, once anchored by the long-gone Caldor department chain. When Caldor went bankrupt, Target stores began eyeing most of its real estate, but for some reason skipped on this site, leaving behind the strange retail ghost town on Highway 130, where the windows that aren't boarded up are hazed over by a greenish mold and a leaky roof has left shallow puddles on store floors among pieces of broken glass and trash. There is no sign that ground has been broken on the new Mart site. Keith Ludwig, one of the current Mart managers who has been charged with consulting for the new space, cannot say whether the Willingsboro site will be ready by the time the Mart is torn down.

Yobb remains optimistic. "You know it's gonna happen," he says. "If it doesn't happen, [the CCIA] has got a problem. They've got sixty to seventy businesses that need homes."

The Stardust Ballroom is one of those businesses. It used to be a bowling alley, but tonight it is a gauze-draped host to twenty line-dancing senior citizens, members of the Burlington County Single Parent Society, who step-clap-turn on the vast glassy expanse of the dance floor to a country song with an almost graceful roboticism. Caroline Gentile has been dancing in the area with her husband for forty-five years. She is 85 years old. Her husband Peter is 96. They do not look their ages. She and her husband will be following the ballroom to its new site after it is demolished, although it will be difficult and probably, she muses, require a carpool. In the meantime the Stardust's owner, Joyce Hanley, is struggling with plans for relocation, as well as an ongoing decline in business similar to that of the Mart.

Le Parfumeur, an unpretentious two-shop business that sells discounted men's and ladies' perfumes from clear glass cases and shelves, has been at the Mart for thirteen years.

Owner Sam Katsman, a man in his 60s with a heavy Eastern European accent, says he "knows nothing" about the Willingsboro site and might retire instead of moving his shop there. Mostly, he says, he will miss his customers. "People are really friendly here. They try to bargain with me but mostly they know I sell cheaper than most stores, like Macy's and Strawbridge's." Sometimes, Katsman confesses, he gives one or two dollar discounts to customers who cannot afford the perfume.

A woman who serves pizza slices at the far end of the Mart didn't want to give her name. A Mart merchant for "twenty-some years," she says her children worked at the Mart as teenagers. She, like Katsman, is unsure about the relocation plans. She says that she has seen the new site for the Mart and "it doesn't seem like it's going to pan out." She slides a slice into the oven for a customer and says, "A lot of people will be sorry to see it go, but things change."

A Ukrainian shoe and leather repairman is not so philosophical. He has worked at the Mart for twenty-six years. "I cannot start again from age 68," he says from behind his shop's counter. "They close the Mart, they kill me."

Sandy Wizov will miss the Mart as well. "Knowing what I do now, and feeling the emotions that come with reading headlines that say the Mart is doomed within a year, saddens me, terribly," he writes in his history. "Certainly during the last dozen or so years of my time at the Mart, I had distinct premonitions the messages being conveyed were in essence asking me, as general manager (acting as parent and guardian), not to love my ugly child. To me the Mart was always a place of beauty. Perhaps it's all in the eyes of the beholder."

Meghan Quinn grew up in Northeast Philadelphia and co-founded Red Letters, an online gallery of mail art at www.20words.org.



"Only five miles, five minutes and five cents from the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge," the old slogan went.

office and a collection of 300 clown figurines behind his desk.

Wizov had a name for the slow, dazed way members of the public would walk around once they'd entered the Mart's cool clutches: the "Mart shuffle."

"Customers were in their glory, watching a first rate series of entertainers, absolutely free. That is, free unless they wanted to make a purchase." As the crowds shuffled, an auctioneer at the Mart would jingle bells and chatter from his storefront to command their attention.

"Some of the nonsense he jabbered went something like, 'Watch what I do with these one dollar bills dangling between my fingers. See them change into ten dollar bills right before your very eyes.' Over and over he repeat-

around the Mart: United Check Cashing, the \$26.99 Sneaker Outlet, Penn-Jersey Seafood and Jomar, among others. And twenty years ago, as a new wave of fortune seekers sought mystic counsel over the telephone, Ruby the Psychic moved into an old shack just off Haddonfield Road with her husband, who is also known as Ruby. They burned the shack, tore it down and built a small brick house with red-bordered windows and large double doors. Ruby and Ruby are allowed to live here, in their place of work, through a grandfather clause in the Pennsauken zoning laws, and for the past twenty years they have resided here happily, hosting summer parties in the parking lot, catching dinner and a movie a few yards away, never minding that they were marooned on a



Ruby the Psychic burned down an old shack and built her new home and business here at the Crossroads.

ed that pitch until someone became curious. Other curious people said, 'Hey, what'd he say?' and before you knew it a mob had semi-circled around his little table. Then, like magic, a door opened behind this jabbering set-up man and someone was flinging combs and cigarette lighters to the people in the crowd. Not wishing to block the aisles, the people were ushered in to watch and became part of the auction. People reacted as if they were being pulled by a chain fastened to a ring in their nose. Action like this was happening during every hour the Mart was open."

The Mart was flashier on the outside, too, in those days. The neon M revolved on its pole, and it was higher, 120 feet above the earth—

concrete peninsula.

"We have no neighbors here, we're very comfortable," says the male Ruby, whose last name is Thompson. "We can make noise, we have barbecues, parties, and family events." He says it's better than living in the crowded city, and the Pennsauken police do a good job of looking out for them. Years ago, he says, the Mart area "was like a town. There was Eric Theaters, a cleaner, Chinese restaurants, the Italian village." It's not the same with so many tenants out of business, but it's home.

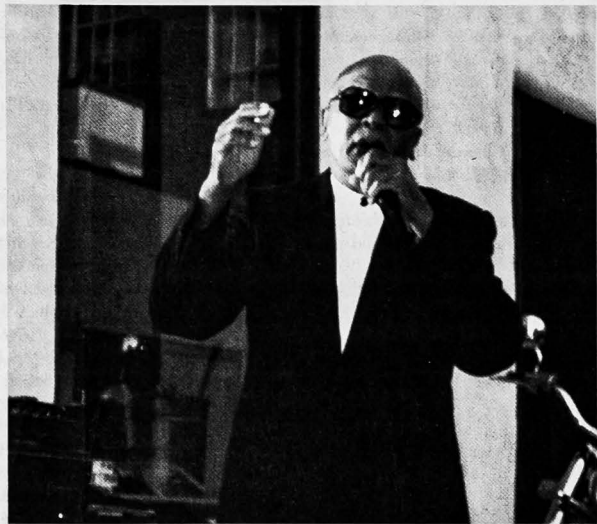
But the Rubys, too, will soon be gone. After years of law and government bending to suit the Mart, the powers that be have bent to shut it down. Years ago the Camden County



Sinatra Hits Manayunk

CHAIRMAN & NEIGHBORS LEARN TO HARMONIZE

BY MATTHEW BRODSKY



"Starbucks wanted me here in the worst way."

MANAYUNK, Phila.—My neighbor dared me the other day to dump a bucket of water on Frank Sinatra's head. It's not that we have anything against doing things his way. But Frank won't leave us alone. He croons every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and sometimes on school nights, right under our bedroom windows. He takes requests. You name the tune, and Frank can sing it. Or he'll try, at least. The shoppers who stroll by tend to order up the classics—"That's Life," "Love and Marriage," "Fly Me to the Moon"—over and over and

over. It's enough to get Frank under your skin—and not in the good way.

Frank is a Manayunk landmark, though, so you learn to cope. He arrived when this blue-collar nook of Philadelphia was just transforming into the snooty, love-it-or-hate-it strip to drop a few hundred bucks on a sunny weekend afternoon, and he decided to stay. For the last ten years, he's been entertaining locals and day-trippers alike. He's not picky. He'll sing for whoever comes.

Frank works the corner on Main and Gay

loud. He has a voice that, depending on the alignment of factors like humidity, time of day and blood-alcohol level, might be mistaken for the pipes of Ol' Blue Eyes himself. First time listeners could be forgiven for thinking his wafting melodies to be the rise and fall a sharp needle over the grooves of a pristine recording, cranked up to ten. His voice draws the curious away from their window-shopping. It lures them from blocks away.

They arrive at Starbucks's corner to find the uncanny, the impossible: a 79-year-old Chairman of the Board, live in the flesh, clad in black business suit and thin black tie, black sunglasses and black fedora. If it's August, Frank might have donned one of those button-down short-sleeve shirts that old men like.

His black karaoke machine with the analog dials on top of its two-foot-tall speaker is behind him, pushed up against the Starbucks storefront. He messes with it on occasion, pumping up the orchestra or turning down the blare. But mostly he just belts into his plastic mike. His fingers grace the mike like a crystal champagne flute as his head sways in time with the canned melody emanating from the speaker. When he lowers his head to hold a note, you can see over his sunglasses. His eyes are closed. Whether Main Street is bustling and enthralled, or the place is dead and he is paid no mind, Frank is strutting standing still.

Those drawn from blocks away by this pied piper of the middle aged giggle and point at the spectacle like school kids. Frank Sinatra is a black gentleman named Arnold J. Scott.

Scott, no doubt, digs the attention.

"I love it," he says. "I enjoy it quite a bit."

Scott, who had been a part-time musician in his younger years, discovered his talent as Frank on a cruise to Bermuda that he and his wife, Floretta, took over a decade ago. One of the on-board festivities was a talent show. When Scott, urged on by Floretta, took center stage, out came "Summer Wind."

"People went crazy," he tells it.

When he returned home, the retired carpenter decided to keep singing. Luck seemed to be a lady to Scott, too. First, a buddy in West

Philly was having a yard sale, where there just happened to be a used karaoke machine up for \$20. Another friend, a woman in Chestnut Hill, pointed him to what was then a burgeoning success in urban rehabilitation—Manayunk.

"That's where it was happening," Scott recalls.

Sinatra was a natural choice. Scott has always held a deep reverence for the Voice from Hoboken.

"I grew up listening to Sinatra when I was a kid," Scott recalls. "In the '40s, I was listening to him with Tommy Dorsey, the Harry James Band. I took a liking to Sinatra back then. No special reason."

Admittedly, even after you've withstood his singing 5,000 times—and you're about to reach for the bucket—it's hard not to be impressed.

"People always told me I sounded like him." He breaks into a couple lines from "I'll Never Smile Again," a Sinatra song from his childhood, to prove it. As Frank sees it, he has no choice but to sing Sinatra.

"Frank's gonna be the man."

On Scott's first night in Manayunk, he set up in front of the continental bistro Zesty's and made a measly \$28. Scott still shakes his head at the thought of it. He struggled for a week, until he took notice of the bigger crowds down the block near Sonoma. He made the move, plugged his machine into a nearby flower store, and electrified the café crowds with his fool's gold tenor.

His tip basket, a huge wicker job with the diameter of a small pizza pie, has been full ever since. As much fun as Scott has, being Frank is also a profitable hobby. He's a bit cagey when asked exactly how much he makes.

"Oh, I do all right." He grins and chuckles. That question was cool, he seems to say, just don't ask it again.

A quick peek in his basket, though, will tell you all you need to know. It's dense with Jacksons and Hamiltons, sprinkled with only a dash of Washingtons and Lincolns. The bills poke out of the wicker on your average Friday or Saturday night. As great as it is to play the home field, though, Scott hits the road on

occasion, most recently headlining a few private parties in Ventnor. As for A.C., Scott remembers how the Tropicana casino came a'courting last summer. He turned them and their funny money down. His three daughters were too concerned for him at his age. And after all, he doesn't do this because he has to, and he doesn't leave Manayunk because he doesn't want to.

"I started in Manayunk," he explains. "I'm established here."

Manayunk is just his kind of town. It doesn't hurt that he has captive audiences at Sonoma and Starbucks. The latter tourist magnet moved into what used to be the flower shop in 2002, a very good year for Scott.

When they came to town, Starbucks didn't make a move to have Scott ousted. Instead, they provided him with complimentary coffee and set up tables outside, creating a veritable venue for Scott.

As Scott puts it, "Starbucks wanted me here in the worst way."

Sonoma provides Scott the electricity to power his music machine, as well as food. To them, and the rest of the Manayunk community, Scott is not just some busker, but a neighbor. When Scott was robbed last month, for instance, half of the twenty or so waiters, customers, yuppies and admirers who witnessed the crime chased after the perpetrator, while the other half phoned the police.

Through the robbery, the lack of a summer wind and the occasional run-in with drunken fraternity brothers, Scott has not just survived on Manayunk's Main Street. He's the main reason for its success, he'll tell you. People from far and wide come to hear the man they call Frank. His Sinatra act is so well-known that he's started to mix things up, dabbling in Ray Charles, Tony Bennett and the Beatles. But for nine out of ten tunes, he sticks with what he does best. He turns heads. He draws crowds. He makes people smile, even as they reach for a bucket of water.

Matthew Brodsky lives in Philadelphia. He can be reached via email at mlbrodsky@hotmail.com.

COUNTRY MUSIC WITHOUT THE CHASER

She left me again, she took the doorknob but left the door, she closed it behind her and went like light across the shore; and then she took the sun, and then she took my dog and drove away in my car with all my favorite shirts. Did I mention she took the sun? Amazing, she just reached up and said, "sun, you belong to me," and then she took the water out of the sea, just cupped her hand and said, "water, you're too wet for me." Unbelievable but true, she turned the oceans into puddles, deserts into clouds and clouds into whales and made them vanish like the sun, and then I found the note, did I mention the note? Did I mention she took my dog? She left the leash and the fleas but she definitely took the dog, it says so in the note. But there must be something left, I can't believe she took my doorknob, what will I close? What will I open? She comes and goes like the fog, gray light in a green haze; she is whiskey in a champagne glass, glazed eyes on an amber sea, she used to be but now she's the past tense, she left me this note where the stereo used to be.

—CHRISTIAN ROBERTS

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METRONAUT

FOUND & LOST



Leaving the Old Neighborhood

I moved into 1806 S. 13th Street in August of 2003. It was a brownstone that I shared with two brothers. They had separate apartments, ate separate meals and watched different television shows on their respective television sets.

Like the rest of my new neighbors, the brothers were old. As I carried boxes into my new home, old Italian ladies donned their stoops in shapeless cotton prints and watched me with unblinking eyes. Some of them scowled, thinking me a scout sent to chart new territories and inadvertently disrupt the delicate rhythm they had established. I was to be the first of many more, all single pseudo-adolescents who would not respond to the personal invitation extended by the local priest to attend Sunday's mass. Despite the misgivings of these women, my own single occupancy was no match against the tide they reinforced with every passing day.

In the colder months, the women put out their cigarettes and retired indoors. At each holiday they decorated their nest so it was unlike any other; flags for Labor Day, then pumpkins on every step of the stoop, then paper turkeys and confetti, then candy canes and Santas and Christmas carols blaring through an ancient and crackling speaker, then the swooning caricatures of Minnie and Mickey Mouse dressed in pink and preparing to kiss—they left their personalities out front, facing the street and the world. The brothers had more private habits, and I

was happy to witness their daily rituals. Every morning when I passed Rudy's door on my way to work I heard the Cartoon Network blaring in the first floor hallway. When summer began to turn to fall, he watched the women move indoors and gathered each of the twenty orchids that he kept in his backyard and brought them downstairs to the basement he had converted to a greenhouse. What he had begun ten years ago with a single plant was now a full time hobby that few ever witnessed. Occasionally when a bulb blossomed on a Friday, I would open the front door to essences of Old Spice and tinny lounge tunes that replaced the Scooby Doo theme song. Rudy had a date, and I liked to imagine him wooing one of the widows next door with a crisp corsage from his collection.

Sometimes I would wake up in the middle of the night to hear Herb, the elder of the two, singing old country songs about heartbreak with Hank Williams. For the most part Herb was a quiet fellow, less gregarious than his younger brother, and most of our encounters took place in the stairwell where sometimes I found him polishing the banister. But each night before I fell asleep, I held my breath and strained my ears to try to hear Herb snoring in the bedroom below my own; sometimes if I could not, I fell asleep wondering if perhaps I had just heard his snoring. At those moments our neighborhood seemed particularly quiet.

The last Saturday I spent in South Philadelphia marked the beginning of spring. The ladies had dug up their dresses from their basement trunks, preened themselves, and gone outdoors. Herb had gone to Atlantic City and Rudy was sitting on the edge of his bed watching the Power Puff Girls. One by one, I was walking nine four-by-five foot paintings to a house at Tenth and Ellsworth. Friends there were going to babysit the series because it was too large for me to bring to California.

The women grinned as I approached and then grumbled when I past. In their minds I was retreating, forfeiting my position to their old ways. My departure was to them a kind of victory. But they grumbled when they saw the paintings, realizing at once that despite my evacuation, I had nevertheless been a witness. I had lived among them and recorded reflections that could subsist outside of the neighborhood. On the canvases I carried they saw themselves depicted. Each painting featured an old couple asleep alongside one another. In the midst of their eternal sleep they were carried past the restaurants, past the European tailors, past the bridal store whose mannequin stood beside a knight in shining armor, past the soda fountain and into the world.

"Come back soon," Rudy said when I gave my final goodbye. "Send a postcard from San Francisco." —CAROLINE PICARD

Paper Pushers Pan Petitions

FIREBRAND'S FONDNESS FOR STAPLES PUTS HIM OUTSIDE THE FOLD

from RANDOLPH page 1
exchange with Marks, took the petitions and disappeared into a back room.

Randolph's eyes clouded and a tense silence descended over his entourage as, in some unseen chamber, Boyle and Accurti deliberated over months of their time and labor.

Ten minutes later, they returned. The commissioner set the petitions down on the counter. "We can't accept these," she said.

Randolph did not look up.

"You cannot or will not accept these?" he asked, his eyes fixed on the petitions, his voice low and the words catching in the back of his throat. The bureau, Accurti explained, does not accept stapled-together forms, because there is no way to prove that the voters who signed knew what they were signing for. The candidate's name and affidavit could have been attached later. To prove her point, she put her hand into the gap created by the staples and flapped it back and forth.

It seemed Randolph had been defeated again, this time by a handful of staples. "This is Kafkaesque," he remarked conversationally.

Ellen Foley, Randolph's girlfriend, put her hand on his arm. "It's okay. It's okay," Randolph said. His eyes glistened.

Outside, Randolph was interviewed by Fox News's

Joce Stermann, who boiled it all down to six words: "So essentially, you got rejected today!"

"This is the kind of thing I'd expect from a tin pot third world dictatorship!" Randolph replied. This is not, he said, what Jefferson and Madison intended when they laid foundations of America democracy.

Now he was right back where he started. "I feel angry," he said.

Christopher Robert Randolph was born in 1971 in South Jersey. His family, working class Polish and Italian immigrants, struggled; he recalls his barely literate grandfather, a janitor at the Frankford Arsenal, fighting his way through the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Evening Bulletin* every night before he working himself to death when Randolph was 12. His father, the recipient of two Purple Hearts, one for each of his tours of duty in Vietnam, lost the security deposit on their apartment after shooting the place up with the M-16 he kept under the bed. After Randolph's first father walked out, his mother Lorraine Liquori remarried when he was 4, and the family moved to Mayfair. Liquori divorced her second husband when Randolph was 15. For the past ten years, she has supported herself by working as a telephone psychic.

As a teenager, Randolph listened to WKDU, WXPB (especially Rich Poor's weekday afternoon show) and on clear days, Princeton University's WPRB. He perused the aisles of the Philadelphia Record Exchange for *Maximum Rocknroll* and *FlipSide* and sent away for foreign fanzines. He hung out at Chaos Records, the Book Trader and Skinz, a sort of proto-Zipperhead that stocked bongos and throwing stars.

"I was radicalized by my own despair at my situation in life, and listening to college radio and going to South Street—finding out what's happening in the world and realizing there are other ways of doing things," he remembers. Today, Randolph does not have hobbies; he has collections. Having moved on from the Yardbirds and the Who to obscure 1960s Cambodian and Thai rock compilations, he listens to everything ranging from hot jazz and blues from the 1920s and 1930s to foreign pop. His South Philadelphia apartment is crowded with thousands of books, photographs and records.

By the age of 14, Randolph had volunteered for Walter Mondale and quit when the candidate declared during a presidential debate that he intended to build up the United States arsenal of nuclear weapons. At 18, disillusioned with the two-party system, he registered Green. He attended the University of Pennsylvania on a Mayor's Scholarship and traveled extensively after graduation. From 1993 to 1997 he served as Research Director for the Buckminster Fuller-founded World Game Institute (WGI),

a Non-Governmental Organization that develops models to more fairly distribute the world's resources. From 1996 to 2000, he led WGI workshops in the U.S., Canada, Estonia, Germany and Denmark. In 1998, he monitored the second election in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2001, he taught English in Qatar. He tries to go abroad once a year, and has been to over thirty countries on five continents, venturing to places like Nepal, Peru, Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Mexico and Iceland.

Randolph says his politics were formed by these experiences with youth culture and at the

Commissioner, seeing as he was the former one and his son's on the commission these days ..."

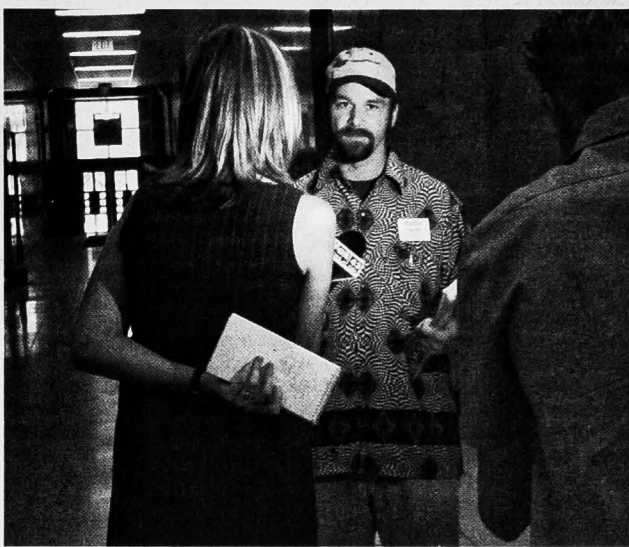
Campaign volunteer and friend Annie Wislowski calls him "Doctor Diatribe."

Yet despite this excess of information or perhaps because of it, Randolph has, she said, "the charisma of a frying pan."

"He's got a heart of gold that's all dipped in tar," she added.

The First District is the poorest in Pennsylvania, covering an area east of Broad Street that stretches south past Tasker Avenue and as far north as Kensington, and dips into pockets of the Northeast and the city of Chester. Since 1988, the district has been represented by Bob Brady. Brady has chaired the Democratic City Committee for the last twenty years and lives in Overbrook, outside the First District boundaries.

In a recent profile, *Philadelphia Magazine* ran down everything Bob Brady has done with a telephone call. These feats include singlehandedly ending the great Wawa strike of 1999, and cajoling the city's warring Democratic tribes of Fumo, Rendell, Dougherty and Street into temporary ceasefires. The party chairman, who won the last election with eighty-six percent of the vote, has got



Joce Stermann of Fox News interviews Chris Randolph.

World Game Institute. "The 'zines and music over the heart of my methodology of constructing a better world, WGI the brain," he says.

"Part of the reason I'm so angry with the Democratic Party is that what look like minor compromises have life and death consequences for people who are not at the same decision making capacity. Telling someone to wait three years to make \$7.00 an hour is not acceptable. I know because I made \$5.15 an hour, and I wasn't supporting a family. I was just helping my mother pay bills. Having Americans work forty hours a week and still live in poverty is not an acceptable compromise. Not having an exit strategy in Iraq is not an acceptable compromise. Working people are just workhorses and then they're put away. The goodwill that my mother is giving the Democratic Party because she thought Jack Kennedy was cute in the 1960s is not worth the abuse she is suffering. At least the Republicans fight for their constituents. But the Democratic Party has to con its constituents every election. They don't even try. They don't even pretend they're trying. They're fraudulent and dishonest."

This is Randolph at his best, just before he descends into the cloud of names, dates, dollar amounts, hands washed and backs scratched that form his polemic on the dishonest ways of his opponent, Rep. Bob Brady. Because Randolph lacks some basic social instinct that alerts members of the species when they have been speaking for too long, these orations tend to be extended.

"What I really want to do is force Brady to address a whole slew of progressive issues—which hasn't happened in this campaign because of all the ballot hurdles," he explains, issues like the overfinancing of the military, the underfinancing of public schools, universal health care, an overly regressive tax system, all issues that got lost in his all-consuming effort to collect signatures.

In a group, these policy speeches have a professorial tone; one on one, his dark eyes sucking in all the light, he seems to address an invisible third party. According to Armstrong, Randolph is a deeply loyal, ball-busting dude who will stay up until 3 a.m. drinking beer and watching a Busby Berkeley musical with him, but in public he reveals only the occasional glimpse of emotional presence, let alone animation. His liveliest moments are during his rants against Brady, who has come to personify everything Randolph cannot stand about the Democrats and the status quo. He has a personal axe to grind.

"So, who has Bob Brady been hanging out with down the shore (where he spends a good deal of the year)?" reads a typical memo sent to Randolph's email list. "He's fighting crime bosses and the Republicans, right? Probably not cutting deals with the PA Turnpike

the city all sewn up. More than the pre-approved candidate of Democratic groups like Liberty City Democrats, the NAACP and the National Organization for Women, he is a notoriously powerful wheeler and dealer.

Maybe Brady was on the phone a lot last month, or maybe he was busy summering at his second home in Wildwood, or maybe he simply considers his challengers from the Republican and Randolph 4 Congress parties so over-matched that he needn't even comment on them. Or maybe he hasn't even heard of Randolph. "I don't even know the name of the person," said Lou Farinella, a Brady staffer.

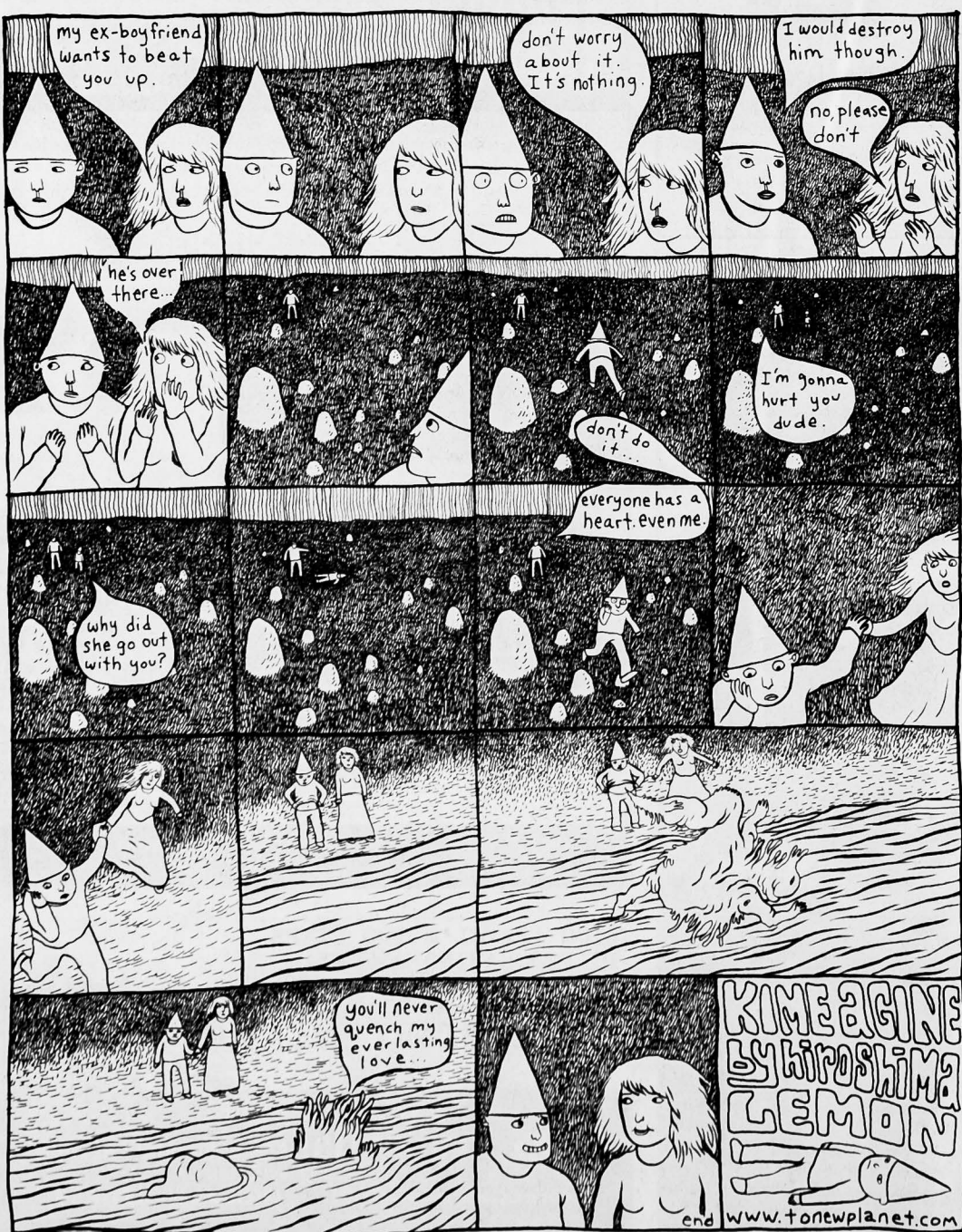
Whatever the case, the closest thing to the Congressman that repeated phone calls to Brady's Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. offices yielded was Steve Kaplan. Like many Philadelphia attorneys who hope to one day mature into judges, Kaplan is doing pro bono for the Democratic City Committee.

"If he can't get 2,100 signatures, then he shouldn't be on the ballot," Kaplan said. "They're not that hard to get. If the major party candidates can do it, so can they."

Randolph, for his part, refuses to sully his campaign with the taint of outside money, which has precluded him from hiring a campaign manager or accepting any contributions. Having lost his job as a tour guide in a November lay-off at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, he has also neglected to seek full-time work. He remained on the unemployment rolls, doing ad-hoc freelance consulting for a market research firm, devoting himself full-time to gaining ballot access. He urged his friends to do the same.

It was these friends who, not always eagerly, provided the muscle and energy of the campaign. Foley, an anthropologist who studies issues of public health in West Africa and met Randolph on Friendster, joked that she would be happy when that other woman, Miss November, was out of the way. Santoro, who in his hours off from WHY? is making a documentary about the campaign, tried to keep Randolph on track with a steady stream of quips and suggestions. Rob Armstrong, who worked with Randolph at Eastern State, was more skeptical of Randolph's pro-Nader stance and his attempts to rouse liberals against the donkeys in a Presidential election year. And Armstrong's wife Jeannette questioned whether running a third-party campaign for Congress was the best career decision for a man in his mid-30s collecting unemployment. At the end of the day, it seemed that everyone involved in the campaign, the half-dozen other signature gatherers and assorted acquaintances included, shared only two basic principles: they more or less liked Randolph as a person, and they believed that anyone who wants to run for pub-

turn to RANDOLPH, page 9



METRONAUT

PLASTIC BUDS PINNED TO A PAPER MAP

Ben Katchor's Hotel & Farm



Interstate Coffee Reviews

NEW YORK BREW MAKES FLORIDA BUZZ

BY AARON COMETBUS

PENSACOLA, FL—Trains run by constantly, cutting this quiet but not sleepy city through the center. This is the panhandle, "the other Florida," a crossroads between South Beach and "the South." Palm trees there are white sand too, but mostly just dilapidated low-lying shotgun shacks with laundry lines and whitewashed, windblown little shops. It's easier to find boiled peanuts than the *New York Times*. Athens, Asheville, or an art colony it aint. Nor is it quaint—just another nice and hard to pin down place I first came to by mistake then stayed a while and got to love.

This time, though, I've returned with a reason. A purpose. A mission, if you will. I've come to secretly replace Pensacola's coffee with coffee from New York City. Let's see if they notice the difference.

Well, okay. Not so secret. Try having a secret in a small town, it's impossible. But the staff at Pensacola's End of the Line Cafe agreed to host my experiment anyway. In fact, they volunteered to be the guinea pigs. If it was an opinion I wanted, why not get a professional one?

Kent was the first of the Cafe's four co-owners I caught up with. It was the afternoon, my morning, when I stumbled into the shop carrying a bag of Porto Rico Importing Company's "French Mocha Java" blend, labels removed. We put on a pot, then brought it out to the Cafe's patio so Kent could smoke while he sipped and spoke. Already I was thinking, "This sure beats doing record reviews!"

"I'm not really a coffee expert," he warned. "Paula is really the expert." But I countered: Everyone is an expert on their own inclinations. Kent set up two cups at once, one with cream and sugar and one without. A scientific approach.

"Good aftertaste," he started. "Compliments my Parliament Full Flavor nicely. Makes me feel content."

Content, I noted, but not particularly impressed. I quizzed him. "A winter coffee? Summer? Spring? Daytime? Nighttime?"

"Early morning."

"What does it remind you of?"

"When I was a kid, when I first started drinking coffee with my brother. We'd make coffee and cinnamon raisin toast before the sun came up, then go hiking two miles in the woods with our 80-year-old neighbor."

On second thought, he said, "It makes me feel like one of those paintings you just bought."

I'd picked up a stack of paintings in Classic Thrift Store style at the classic local thrift store the day before. Wintry trees and falling fall leaves drenched in that particular soft-lens sentiment or sediment, as American as Socialist Realism is Russian. Now Kent was lost in one of them. In a time before the forests behind his childhood home were torn down and turned into subdivisions.

I thought, "Well, that's pretty good coffee!" but Kent was hinting at something else. What he meant was, I'd made it a little weak. My tastes do tend to lead toward the lighter side when it comes to coffee, it's true, preferring twenty cups of thin stuff to five or ten cups of mud. But in this case, my tastes may have fouled the taste test impartiality. Duly noted for next time: Coffee should be made to taste by the one tasting it. Let the guinea pigs construct their own cage.

In closing, Kent found his coffee satisfying but not startling, heartwarming but not hardy, or heady. But the verdict was out on whether the weakness was due to the blend or my own blandness. Oops!

All four of the End of the Line co-owners have separate jobs on the side, some more than one. Bidding farewell to Kent, I walked down the block to the corner bar where Paula was moonlighting. I pulled up a stool in the darkness, and while everyone around got drunk, we sat stoically and talked.

Paula is Pensacola's coffee connoisseur. In a world of people who talk about coffee but only sip daintily on one small cup in the morning, Paula is the pinch hitter, the true believer, rarely seen without a cup in hand at all times of day or night. She does not live on coffee and cigarettes, she is coffee and cigarettes. She drinks more of it than me, and that's just fucking nuts.

"What's the perfect cup like?" I wanted to know. Paula rattled off a long list of pleasing qualities which sounded to me more like symptoms of disease.

"Like bark. Pine bark. Dusty, and really

dark. Yellow bubbles on top. At first it's really acidic, followed by a woody aftertaste. Maybe smoky would be a better term."

She pulled on her cigarette for dramatic pause, then went on.

"Thick and oily. It should leave oily residue in the cup, and make you feel like someone thumped you on the nose. You get big wide eyes every time you take a sip."

The time of judgement was close upon us. She took the hopeful bag of grounds out of my arms and emptied it into her personal coffee-maker behind the bar. It growled and sighed.

"Too much personality," I pondered while waiting. "Good in people? Bad in coffee?"

"Okay in coffee, but bad in people," claimed Paula, well known around town for liking only people with personality to spare. But we look into mirrors differently than we look into each other's eyes.

I looked at her. "Should a good cup be affirming or revelatory?"

"Affirming," she said. I nodded. Therein lay the difference between us.

Finally, after all of the foreplay, Paula poured two cups. She sniffed it, looked at it, tasted it with her tongue. Skeptical. Her eyes did not open wide.

"If I went to Denny's and this was the coffee, I'd be pleased." That was all she had to say, but later she did add, "I should have just drank rat poison."

At midnight it was raining lightly. I walked back to the Cafe and helped Scotty, third of the four owners, close up. We brought in the chairs, put on some Nat King Cole, turned off all but one light. Then, after a long day dispensing coffee, he put on a fresh pot just for the house, using my bag of unmarked beans.

"This shit's pretty good!" he said. "Smooth. Though you never know what people mean when they say that."

I withheld comment—something rare or even unknown for me—in order to record Scotty's opinion without bias. "What does it make you feel like doing?" I asked.

"Killing cops. That's the first thing that comes to mind. But maybe just sitting around listening to a wistful record. Either one of the two."

What more could you ask for in a cup of coffee, or in anything, really? Except that, from what I know of Scotty, I suspected that nearly anything would lead him down one of those two paths. I prodded him to pin it down to a finer point.

"If you were on death row," he said, "and getting ready for your last cup of coffee, this would be pretty good. That doesn't mean it's the greatest in the world, though. I'd be content."

Again switching tracks—or inevitable paths—between death and heartbreak, Scotty compared the coffee to the covers of Jackie Gleason records, "with the woman sitting by herself at the piano looking longingly in the distance for something, and we don't know what."

"Whatever it is, it's not us," I thought, but didn't interrupt or loud.

"This isn't office coffee, but the kind you make at home. Maybe this sounds bad—I don't mean it to—but if you want to get dressed up like Mr. Rogers on a Sunday morning—chilling in your sweater—no one there—put on a nice record, maybe read the paper, but probably more like sit at the kitchen table, by a window. Or maybe have someone over but not really have a lot to say. Definitely not gas station coffee, not that that's bad, but this doesn't have the intensity of gas station coffee. But I'm more into downers than uppers. People are in too much of a hurry all the time, they should slow down a little bit. But this is the first cup. Maybe after the third or fourth cup, my opinion will change."

And change it did! When this coffee kicks in, it really kicks! Suffice to say, we ground our teeth down to the gums in conspiratorial conversation which was anything but easygoing. After the third cup, we were attempting to learn Arabic! Now that's real coffee! We only left and finally locked up shop as the sun was coming up.

Still buzzed, I left town before Jen, the fourth co-owner of the Cafe, could be found for comment.

Aaron Cometbus has been publishing Cometbus fanzine for nearly a quarter of a century. He lives in New York.

from RANDOLPH page 8

lic office should be able to do so. It was a good thing Randolph had so much free time. Gathering hundreds of signatures is hard work. First you must convince a voter registered in the city of Philadelphia to stop. Then you must explain to her the difference between living east and west of Broad Street. Then you must convince her that you will not be mailing her literature or calling her home. Then you must ask her to print and sign and date legibly. You must have working pen, and you must prevent it from being stolen by the homeless people who express curiosity at your activity—although the homeless, if registered to vote, are eligible to sign your nomination papers. And you must repeat the process 2,407 times.

"I think the next thing we learned is how hard it is to get signatures," Armstrong said.

The petitions arrived at Randolph's apartment at 1234 S. Lancaster Street about a week late, bearing the address "Chris Ranzolth, 12345 Hancock St." Randolph didn't think he had enough to distribute to all of his volunteers, so he called up to Bureau of Elections and asked what he should do. As Randolph remembers it, state employee Adam Yake instructed him to copy the forms he already had. Randolph follows these directions, but erred in his choice of biding. The official state petitions are eleven inches high and thirty-four inches wide, and five one fold. Randolph, who wasn't ready to pay an offset press hundreds of

dollars for this special size, improvised. He made two standard legal sized copies and stapled them together. But as he learned from Monna Accurti, the commonwealth forbids the stapling of nomination petitions.

"They [candidates] always get the right directions. There wouldn't be a situation like that that would happen," said Bureau of Election spokesperson Brian McDonald. "There was probably a miscommunication on your end. The candidate in question may have misinterpreted what he had been told. Adam told him that you could have copies provided so long as they are professionally done."

But Mr. McDonald, can't one have copies professionally made and professionally stapled together?

"Any answer that anyone would give down there would be one hundred percent accurate," he insisted.

Yake did not return numerous calls to comment for this story.

Randolph's signature gathering was not without conflict. After a minor skirmish in June with members of the Liberty City Democrats, tensions between the Randolph campaign and the party machine came to a head on the last weekend of July when, Randolph says, a volunteer collecting money for the Democratic National Committee told one of Randolph's volunteers that the corner of Tenth and South was DNC turf. The volunteer telephoned Randolph, who flew to the scene and called

Santoro, who brought his camcorder. Randolph—emotionally absent, slightly dull, sarcastic-cum-mudgeon—was suddenly replaced by a righteous maniac who was, strangely, just as devoid of spontaneity and fire as the usual Randolph.

The video shows Randolph screaming at the Democratic volunteer for a solid two minutes, compelled by the thought that one of his volunteers and friends had been intimidated by this man, the hand of the party and all of its money.

"How much work are you getting done now?" Randolph asked, pointing his fingers at the volunteer's face. "How do you like it?"

Randolph didn't let the moment pass. His rage didn't boil up or fizzle out, but simply fed on itself.

"I'm happy to scream at you, because you're an asshole!"

According to Armstrong, Randolph is known to work himself into such states. "Sometimes he spits when he gets mad," he offered.

During the petitioning period, Randolph 4 Congress hosted two benefits. The first was a flop at the Ukrainian Club that ended with the refunding of people's seven dollars by 11 p.m., which Randolph later described as "the worst event in the history of human events," something that he was glad he "had nothing to do with."

The second featured live bands with working sound equipment and a crowd of dozens, but not everyone was happy.

"Why aren't there more people here?" asked Carmen, a British virologist and member of the Wranglers, Randolph's Quizzoo team, who hold the Dirty Frank's record at eight straight wins. "I don't know what I can do, because I'm not a citizen. But it's not that difficult. I don't understand what he's doing."

It can be hard to depend on the kindness of friends.

Randolph's first and only campaign meeting of the election effort drew a dozen friends and two pierced, spiky-haired girls lured by a Craig's List promise of fifty cents a valid signature. Even over beer and pizza, Randolph could not be dissuaded from lecturing on the district's history and Brady's hypocrisy, foibles and greed. When Santoro or Armstrong attempted, gently, to steer the conversation towards the best way to double the number of signatures, stalled at 1,200, in the next ten days, the candidate turned to statistics and colorful stories of being shunned by Democratic special interest groups that refused to endorse him.

"Can we skip the demographic breakdown and just move on?" Santoro finally interrupted, not so gently. As the meeting rolled into its second hour, not a single task had been assigned. There was general talk of a debate and press conference, billboard liberation, African American talk radio, wheatpasting and sticker-

ing, but no one agreed to place any calls, and no deadlines or budgets were set.

"Let a thousand flowers bloom," declared Randolph at last, paraphrasing Chairman Mao. "If anyone has any ideas, do it. I endorse it."

As Randolph has it, Brady divides his time between renaming post offices and making sure that the Chinook helicopters being sent to Iraq are built at a Philadelphia plant. But on July 27, Brady managed to clear his schedule for a John Kerry rally on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Brady occupied the platform with Senate candidate Joseph Hoeffel, a tearful Puerto Rican immigrant by the name of Georgia Fernandez (she has a miniature Statue of Liberty in her living room surrounded by family photographs), and a crew of racially balanced citizens of all ages stationed underneath "A Stronger, More Secure America" banner. Kerry gave a speech, waved to the crowd and accepted Brady's burly embrace.

Four hours later on the other side of town, Randolph and Foley joined two dozen activists at Finnegan's Wake for the Peace Action Convention party, where a Kerry representative attempted to bring potential Nader voters back into the Democratic fold as the Boston convention played on the big screen.

Bob Brady, corpulent buffoon, is a perfect Taylor, the leader of the party machine that dominates Mr. Smith when he goes to Washington. Randolph, however, makes a terrible Jimmy Stewart.

He rose, clad in Global Thrift suit and hiking boots, as stodgy as ever. He talked circles around Yakeima McAllister, who was yet to find her footing after one week as a Kerry spokesperson. Scoffing at Kerry's plan to provide ninety-five percent "universal" health coverage—only one hundred percent will do—he moved on to the topic of military spending. Just before being cut off by event facilitator Phyllis Gilbert, the threat of a Randolph filibuster seemed imminent. After he retired to his seat, McAllister took a few more questions. The progressives longingly watched Howard Dean speak, drained their glasses and settled their bills.

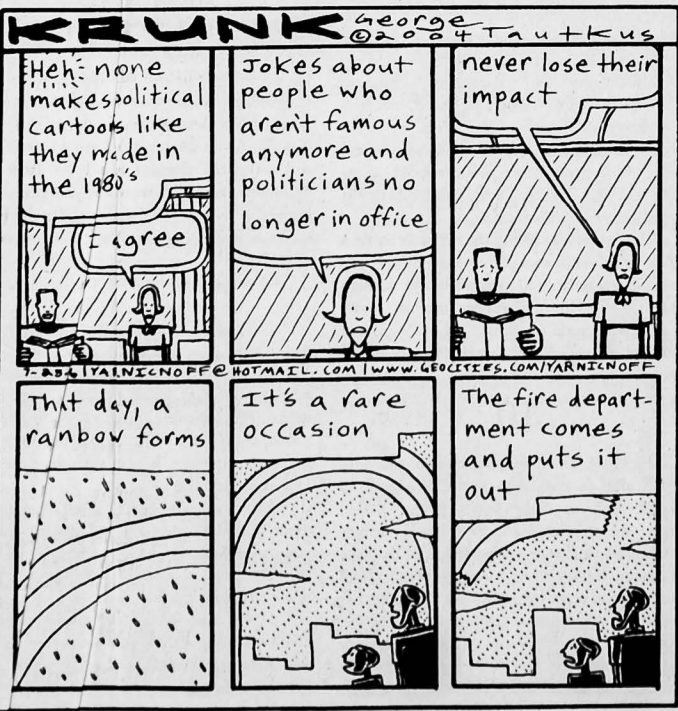
Randolph and Foley remained. Heads huddled, they chatted about the other peace advocates, some of whom Randolph knew from internships and volunteer programs years ago. When Senate hopeful Barack Obama took the stage, Foley turned to watch.

"Do we participate in a politics of cynicism," he asked, "or do we participate in a politics of hope?"

Randolph turned to Foley, unable to resist. "Does he really want an answer to that?"

Foley smirked his arm.

On August 19, the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania ordered the Bureau of Elections, Commissions and Legislation to accept Randolph's filing. As of August 23, Monna Accurti had not yet accepted his petitions.



TO THE PUBLIC

LET THE WALLS SPEAK

YOUR WORDS HERE

In our next issue, *THE INDEPENDENT* will publish a full page poster of George W. Bush as Uncle Sam, designed by Jesse Goldstein. We'd like your help writing the words. We've included three sample ideas below for your consideration, but we're sure you'll be able to best them. Send your slogans by email to editors@philadelphiaindependent.net, or by mail to TPI, Bureau of Posters, 1026 Arch Street, Phila., PA 19107. The winner may choose to stay anonymous or be honored for his or her rabble-rousing in the issue.



WIN THIS POSTER

On the next three pages, you'll find three posters. Cut one out and put it up anywhere you choose—in your room, in your window, on a wall, wherever. Then take a picture of the poster on display, and send it to us at either of the addresses above, along with your return address. You will be rewarded with a signed two-color greenprint of Jesse Goldstein's "Mission Accomplished" poster as seen below. All photos must be postmarked by November 1, 2004.



ON POSTERING

Making Public Walls Into Blank Pages

INTRODUCED & CURATED
BY JESSE GOLDSTEIN

The posters on the next few pages are part of a work of political art, a work that's only half complete. There are 10,000 copies of each one, waiting to be used.

Finishing it will involve some scissors, a blade, or maybe just a firm tear. It may also involve a Sharpie, a paint pen, or some other marking device—to personalize the message. Finally, it will require some paste, tape, or other clever adhesive strategy to affix each or at least one of these images to a new, semi-permanent home.

But where? In your home? In your window? In your office? On the street?

Somewhere, anywhere, so long as you put it up.

1.

Art is immanent to ALL men, and not only to a select few; art is not to be sold, no more than are breathing, thinking, loving. Art is not merchandise. But for the bourgeoisie everything is a commodity: man is a commodity.

—AUGUSTO BOAL

The political poster. Its content, and by extension its message, is no more spectacular than any other image produced by our culture. It is no more stylized, no more poignant, no more profound or artistic than any well-made advertisement, magazine, or product design.

How could it be? Like shoes, medicines, and laundry detergents, political opinions find their visual expression through the same designers using the same Adobe computer programs replete with the same special filters, tools and eye-catching fonts. All products and ideas are polished into a homogenous fog of good design.

2.

Can a political poster actually be "political?" The political aspect of a work often seems little more than a sellable characteristic of a commodified object, the work's "political-ness" presiding as the fashion du jour. A lantern-jawed Soviet farmer leaves his factory to join Andre the Giant's growing posse. He is riding a snowboard and drinking extreme soda and we are left to ask: Is there any sincerely "political" art—art capable of provoking critical thought or even action?

3.

Throughout the last century, there was faith in the potential of political art. Dadaists, Surrealists, Futurists, Constructivists, Situationists... each movement in its own way believed that their artistic production was a necessary and integral part of a more general opposition to the state.

Bertolt Brecht, a materialist playwright, was one of the faithful. One of the strategies of Brecht's theater was to disorient the audience with morally ambiguous characters and incongruous narratives that resisted easy identification. Brecht felt that if theater presented the world in a realistic state of disequilibrium (as opposed to an idealistic state of contrived narrative cohesion), then the audience would be left with no choice but to think for themselves. His goal was not to demand action, but to compel reflection.

4.

Instead of telling people what to think, a political poster can aim for a more Brechtian success. To do this, it must present a constellation of ideas that encourages its audience to respond critically. The political poster need not merely become a pulpit for the artist to spread his gospel. It also has the potential to be an open forum for whoever crosses its path.

There is much to avoid. I think of the myriad anti-war posters I sifted through in compiling this collection. Imagine, if you will, George W. Bush (with a menacing smile, blood soaked hands, or both), some missiles, some reference to the oil industry, a slightly subverted representation of the American flag, and then in bold type "No Blood For Oil" or "George W. Bush is the REAL Terrorist!" Each is a well-made poster expressing well intentioned sentiments, yet sadly divorced from any circuit of communicative appeal. These posters demand that their opinion be heard, but in an altogether flat and predictable manner. The artist's strong political conviction stands between her and the spectator as an impenetrable barrier. While this may allow

the artist comfort in knowing that they have done their part to save the planet, the politics of self-valorization offers little to the audience besides the ability to recount to others that political art was witnessed.

5.

I could, though, disagree with myself.

In a world where all outlying opinions, fashions and actions are demonized and labeled aberrant, it requires some level of courage to assert an opinion that breaks from the consensus. Sometimes it requires a level of courage to assert anything at all.

6.

"The Saudi women who first drove automobiles risked and suffered penalties, overcame inhibitions, and shattered norms, heroic in their defiance of an absurd convention. We have our own Rosa Parks. That such great courage should have been required to challenge such petty barriers is a demonstration of the power of social consensus. How many minor coercions are required to sustain similar customs and usages? How aware are any of us, absent direct challenge, of how we also deal in trivial coercion?"

—MARILYNNE ROBINSON

Marilynne Robinson, in a recent issue of *Social Research* (her essay was subsequently reprinted in the August issue of *Harper's*).

8.

I prefer to avoid such cozy symbiosis between a poster and its location. Perhaps more than any specific criteria regarding content, the incongruity between content and the location where a poster is placed has the potential to be successful in a Brechtian sense, introducing a sense of disequilibrium that disrupts the status quo, beckoning for an active response. When placed beside advertisements, a poster risks being interpreted as just another commercially funded image. But placing a poster on top of an advertisement creates an altogether different effect—the obstructed ad ends up framing the poster, which then reads as deliberate, intentional, and outside of the consensual order of things. Placing a poster where advertisements are never found has a similar effect—really, the poster will succeed so long as the space it occupies is not designated for sanctioned imagery and ideas.

9.

The placing of these posters occurs in a very different kind of theater than the one Brecht

Artist Biographies

JESSE GOLDSTEIN (Page 10 & 13) works out of Space 102A, a Philadelphia art collective of which *THE INDEPENDENT* is a member. He is moving to Toronto this fall to begin graduate study in Political Economy.

PETER KUPER (Page 12) co-founded the political comics magazine *World War 3 Illustrated* in 1979 and remains on its editorial board to this day. He is also an art director of INX, a political illustration group syndicated through the web at www.inxart.com.

Peter Kuper's illustrations and comics appear regularly in *TIME*, *The New York Times*, and *MLA*, where he illustrates "Spy vs. Spy" every month. He has written and illustrated many books, most recently an adaptation of Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and *Sixty and Stones*, a wordless graphic novel about the rise and fall of empires that will be published this September. More of his work can be seen at www.peterkuper.com.

FEBU (Page 11) is an artist living in France.

transgression of finding creative homes for these posters, alongside countless others who will be doing the same.

In this regard, the living theater is imminently expandable. It will exist in any and every place where you happen to pass by one of these posters, any and every place where one of these posters could be placed, or should be placed. The living theater has the potential to envelop our entire world, and in so doing, turn us into actors and directors in the production of our lives.

11.

Something peculiar is created by the poster left out in public. It occupies a small rectangle of space that it has no right to, bringing this space out from the background and turning it into an active part of the landscape. The poster is unsanctioned, minorly legal, like graffiti. The wall's rights are juridically protected from such abuses. Yet unlike aerosol graffiti, the poster remains materially separate from the wall that holds it up, and the space that the poster delineates remains separate as well. But what of the space inside the poster? My answer is short: there are no rules about graffitiing on top of graffiti. You can write on this poster whatever you like, for this newly formed space is not protected in the same way as the walls surrounding it. It exists almost magically as neither legal nor illegal, a space without laws about how it should be used, a truly public space, where anyone may choose to add their thoughts without fear of reprisal. It offers the security to reply safely.

12.

So please in the end, ask you to consider the posters offered on the following pages as one piece of this larger, ancient yet unfinished work of art. The posters are simply props, and it is the actors surrounding them who will (or will not) define the performance. An artist has already played his or her role in designing the images. The editors of this paper have played theirs in publishing the image. So then what next?

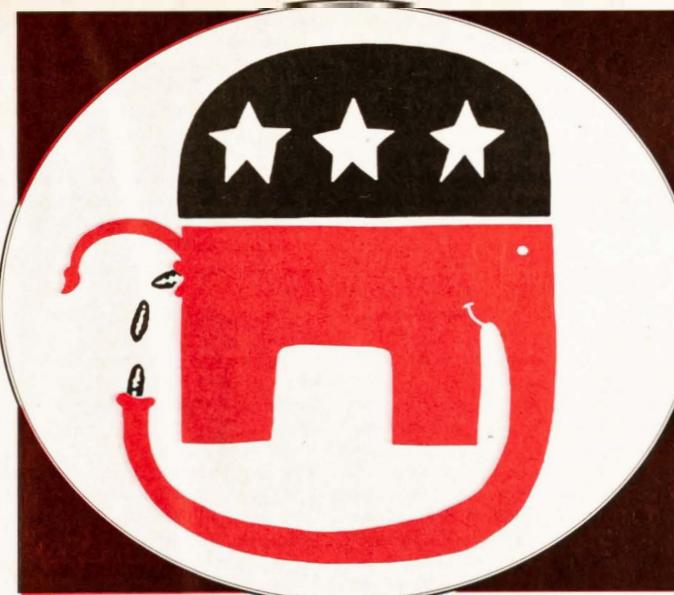
I've thought of some script...

-The page is turned, the image is forgotten, end of story.

-She cuts the image out and places it on her pile of important items, but more important items begin to come in, and it gets torn and subsequently lost amidst the superfluity of important items. She finds it sometime in December and thinks...

-The image is taped to the wall in its apartment. A friend comes over and says "how stupid and corny the image is, so he takes it down."

-The image is cut out, carefully, and then taped to the inside of her window. Dogstop pees on the tree outside her house and the owners, sitting, each look at the poster, it turns. She comes out herself, and a dog walker asks her about the picture. She says...



ANDREW JEFFREY WRIGHT

laments that we are mired, as a society, by the constraints of forced consensus—that we live in a society that shuns outliers and engenders a conformism that discourages moral and intellectual courage and the ability to think for oneself, especially if one's thoughts would fall outside of the proscribed norm.

In this regard, putting up a poster that expresses or asserts a position outside of the consensual norm can be in and of itself an act of courage. Once hung, each poster offers the trace of an individual asserting the right to speak where speech is consensually prohibited, and the right to speak of ideas that are not consensually accepted. These small transgressions are gestures of independence and resistance.

7.

The consensus is polysemous. As a system of meanings it encompasses positive and negative, Democrat, Republican, conformist, contrarian. Just as there is a correct way to support the political status quo, there is a correct way to be opposed to it. Many political posters simply strengthen consensual positions and ossify their differences. Examples:

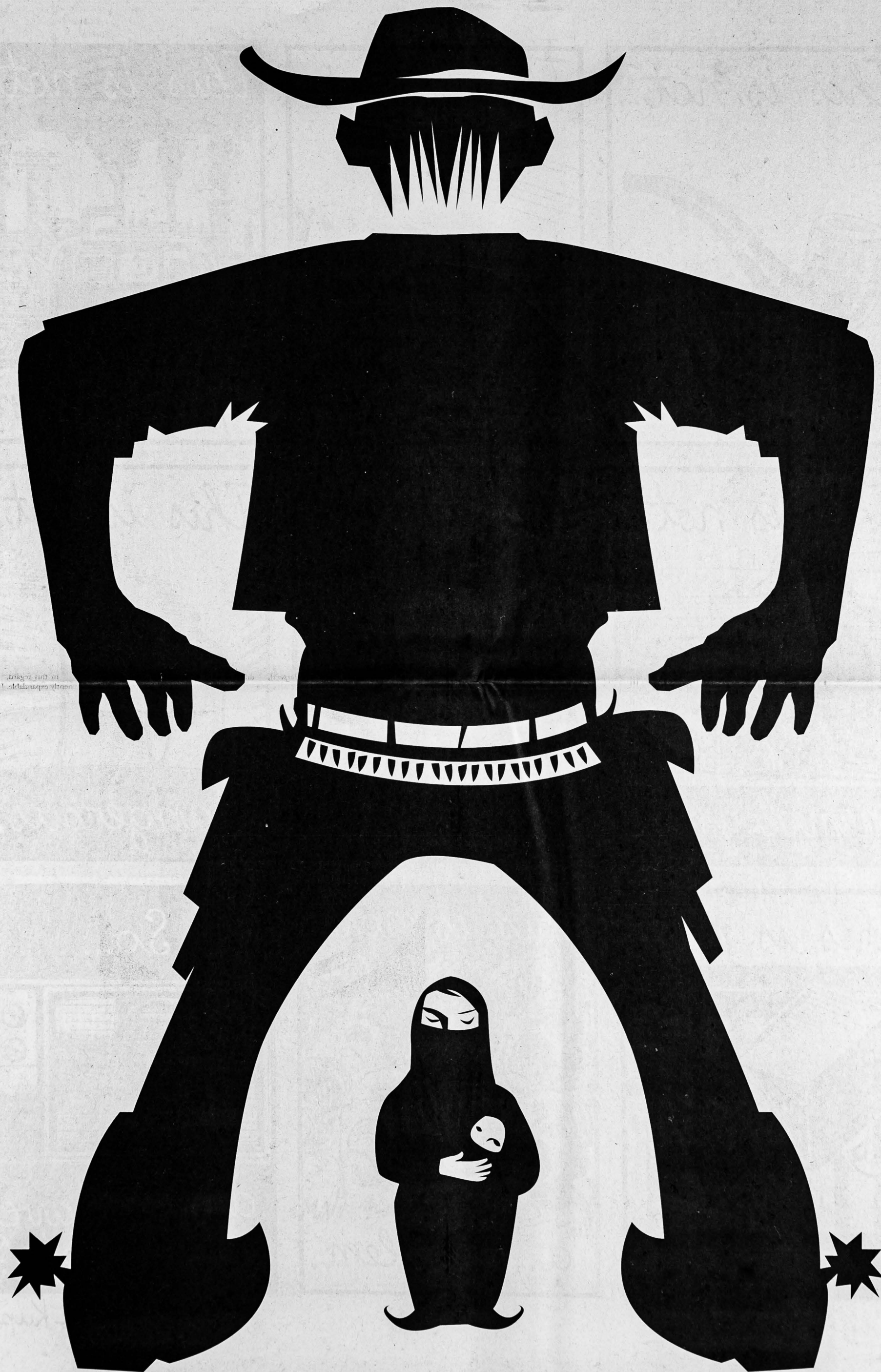
A house of young, self-identified marchists hangs a stencil poster in the kitchen. It recedes into the background, fitting in seamlessly with the rest of the house. While largely unnoticed by passers-by it helps assert the political identity of the household.

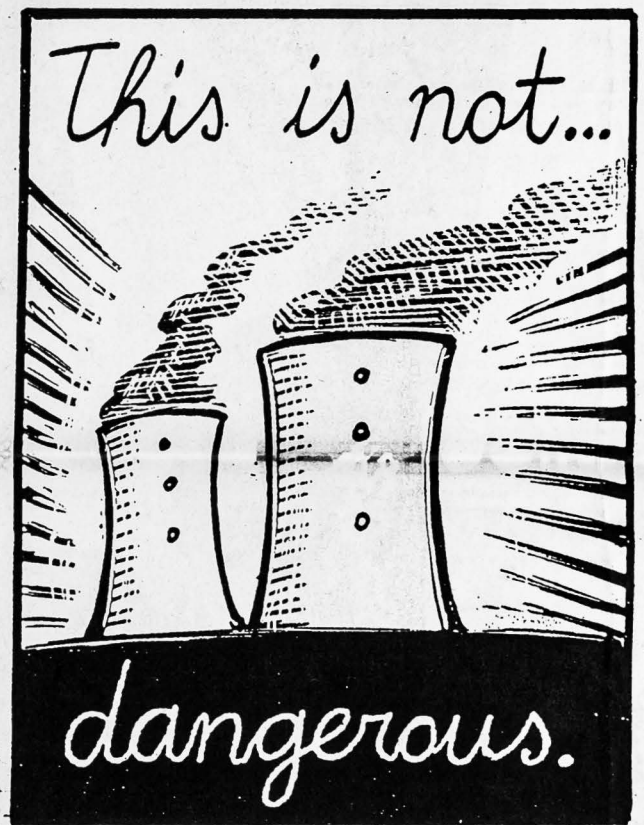
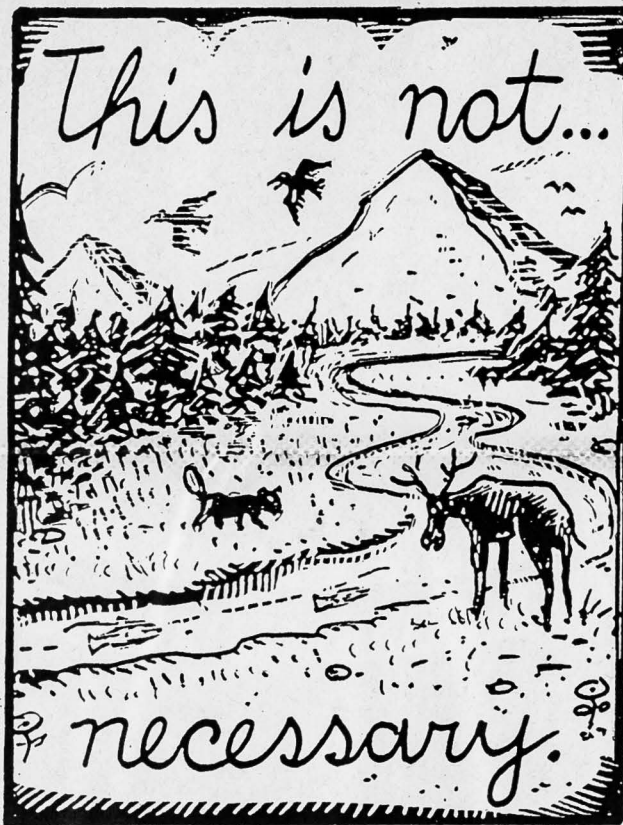
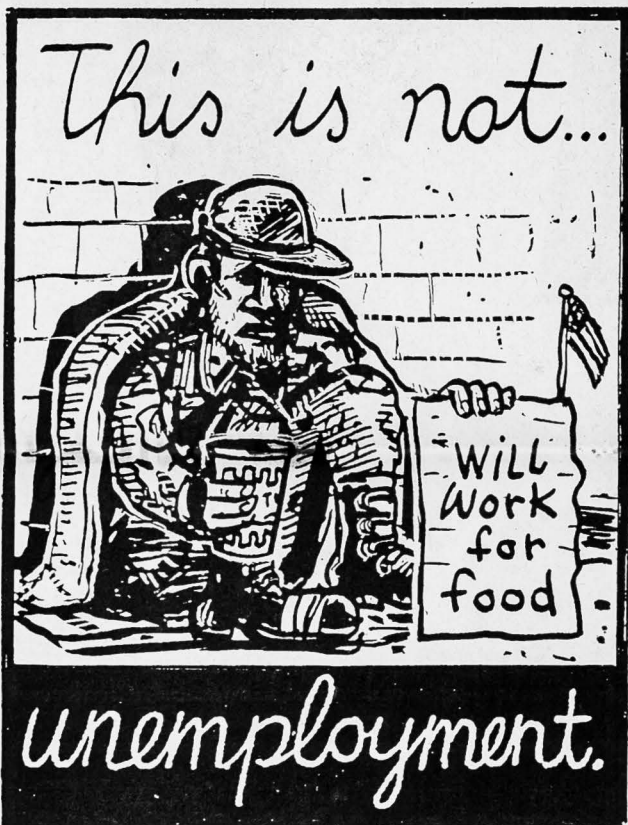
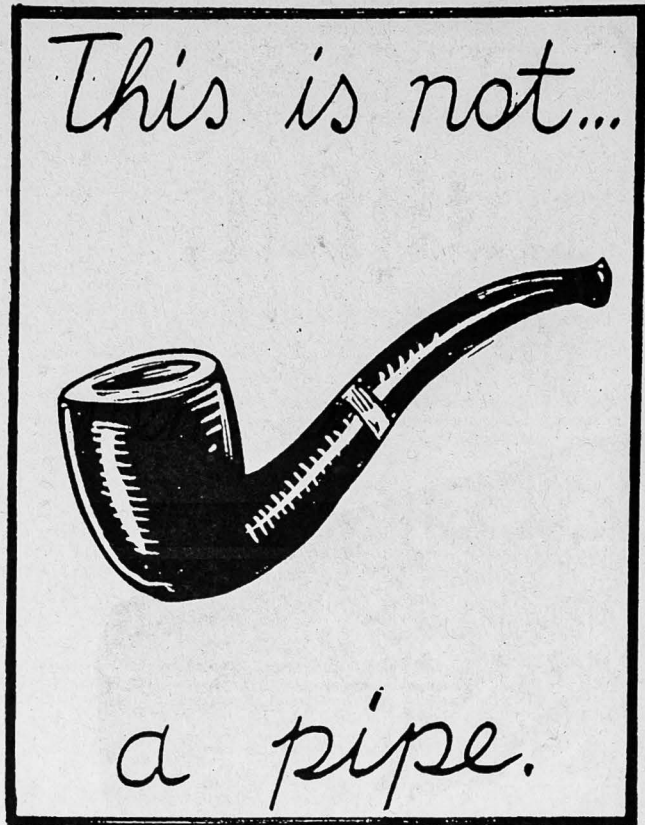
worked in. It is more akin to Augusto Boal's living theater, what he calls the poetics of the oppressed. The living theater breaks down the boundaries between audience and performers. In traditional theater, all the action is accomplished on stage, and the audience is brought towards catharsis, vicariously experiencing a predetermined fictitious act. With the living theater the audience plays the dual role of spectator and performer, simulating not-yet occurring real acts, and retaining control over the creation of the performance.

The goal of the living theater is to create a sense of incompleteness that may compel the spectator/performer to seek fulfillment through real action. The theater becomes in Boal's words, "a rehearsal for revolution... No matter that the action is fictional; what matters is that it is action!"

10.

This last act in our poster drama is very much akin to the living theater. We will all choose how to make sense of this shared prop—these posters—and we will all do our performance (whichever we decide on) to the general score. If you choose to engage, then you can judge for yourself whether the solidarity felt through the communal performance of the living theater can ripen into a shared, politically volatile solidarity. Hopefully, you will feel a small sense of solidarity through the minor





with apologies to Magritte

Peter Kuper

Commander of the Faithful,



He orders the good and prohibits all evil.

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TO THIS NEWSPAPER.

You may recall that this publication began its short life as an odd little booklet of flimsy, oversized pages, a booklet so curious about its own geographic surroundings that it boasted, flamboyantly and unreasonably, that it was, in fact, a fully-grown newspaper. Like a small puppy strutting around town in a lion's pelt, this led to some absurd scenes. Speeches were made from the tops of milk crates to stunned commuters on train platforms. Quarters were collected in cigar boxes, until the authorities intervened. Steel newsboxes were driven about in small minivans and chained to poles by the soft hands of children. In the darkest hours, tobacco and even black coffee were prepared and consumed. Then it arrived, our very own newsprint baby, kicking and screaming. The first issue showed some promise, but was highly amateurish in its composition and presentation; ten uneven pages riddled with typographical errors and wet with the lather of adolescent manifestos. We promised that we would swallow the city whole, "to capture the doings and dreams of an entire city." We promised to make THE PHILADELPHIA INDEPENDENT into our city's last great newspaper. The fever that we felt then still consumes us now. We remain committed to keeping all of these promises.

But what has changed is the price of raw newsprint (it has increased), our page count (it has more than doubled), our taste for simple luxuries (a heated office and a minimum wage among them), and our ambitions (a budget for giving fair compensation to our contributors). These have all in turn increased the audacity of our demands on you, the public. We now believe this newspaper to be worth an entire dollar. However, we do not want you to interpret this as the usual ultimatum implied by a price. You have already given us that thing we wanted most in the first place—a loyal readership. Give us but another five dollars, and watch as our next six issues make this one look as infantile as our very first effort must look to you now.

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THE BAGHDAD POST

Iraqi & American Students & Teachers Pass Letters Across Enemy Lines

from BAGHDAD page 1

roamed the halls of his school, asking students what they'd ask if they could write to kids in Iraq. The answers came back: What do you do after school? What kind of music do you listen to? Do you play ball?

All he needed were some Iraqi students to talk to. He combed the Internet, searched weblogs from Iraq, contacted aid agencies. Eventually, a family friend put him in touch with a journalist, who put him in touch with an aid worker, who put him in touch with an Iraqi cab driver "who knows everyone," who put him in touch with Nawar, a 35-year-old teacher at a girls' school in Baghdad. Another contact put him in touch with Numair, a 22-year-old student teacher at a boys' school nearby. Excerpts from their email correspondence appear below, followed by excerpts from students' correspondence.

Except for my father and cousin, everyone's names have been changed. Due to limited space, some passages and letters have been omitted.

BRUCE & NAWAR

6 March 2004

Dear Nawar, I am a member of September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows and a teacher in an inner-city high school in Brooklyn, New York. I am running a workshop for selected students. It will focus on a) the real people caught in the phrase "collateral damage," and b) communicating with children of school age in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Can you please help connect my students to your children in school?

I have many questions. Please let me know if they are a bother to you. Where are you? How old are your students? Is there anything we can do for you?

With respect, Bruce

14 March 2004

Hello, You can ask me whatever you want, and if I'm bothered I will let you know immediately. I do appreciate our new friendship and I also don't want to bother you. I'm in Baghdad, if that is what you want to know ...

I want to know a lot about you, what kind of material you teach, how old are you, what do you think of us, what are you thinking of now. Oh, there are a lot of things I want to ask you about, let it be one by one. Let us share ideas, information. Anything you find interesting and don't forget you can ask whatever you want.

Yours sincerely, Nawar

16 Mar 2004

Nawar, First, a general thank you. ... We are a high school in Brooklyn, New York. The ages range from 15 to 19. I teach Earth Science and Space Science. I am 62 years old (today is my birthday). I was a management consultant before September 11, 2001 and lost my business then. I taught many years ago and thought that it would be good to return to the classroom, and it has been wonderful. I love the kids. The administration is a blind giant, but the kids are wonderful ...

I want to wage Peace. I know the pain of losing dear ones to the madness of political actions. I know you must feel some of this pain also. I believe there are other ways to solve problems.

Respectfully, Bruce

4 April 2004

Hello Bruce, Thanks for asking about me and thanks for your delicate feeling. I'm in need for such words today. I'm very sad today. The occupation soldiers came to our Institute, they were so rude and they have no decency. They treated my girls badly. I can't say anything more because I'm so, so sad.

Yours, Nawar

4 April 2004

Nawar, Well, then. Take a walk in the park with me. The first hints of spring are in the air. The yellow forsythia flowers shine in the misty rain like chains of butterflies on long stems. Green fingers of tulips-to-come peek up from the moist brown soil and there is a smell in the air of rich earth. A squirrel watches me, still in her sure knowledge that I cannot see her if she does not move. There! A cardinal sits on a high branch. Incredibly bright red—a beacon through the fog.

No one can say how long this occupation will last. There are those who strongly oppose it and the next election may give a change in direction. In the meantime I think you have to focus on the girls. I know when I look up (at administration, red tape, government) I am extremely frustrated, but when I look 'down' at the students, then I see the light. No, I do not compare my soft position to yours. It is only that I want you to focus on the good, the girls, and the possibility of a better future.

Bruce Wallace

14 April 2004

Hi Nawar, Some of your student mail is

coming through now, and I am glad for many reasons. The first reason is selfish, because it means you and the students are well and I will worry less.

I hear horrid news from Fallujah and pray that things like that stop—forever!—and that you and your students may never know such things. It is hard for me to put this into words because I stop myself from writing words clearer than "things."

Regards, Bruce Wallace

28 April 2004

The last two weeks were very crucial in the neighborhood. My house was shot because of the random shooting on the highway. I'm confused and tired, I hope this will end forever.

We are the victims of nothing. How are you? Yours, Nawar

1 May 2004

Nawar, I hope you are well, and I hope that some simple quiet can come into your life ...

I notice that the letters from your students have slowed down ... Is this because they are not interested? Is this because of the war? I wonder how the school can keep open in these times. How brave all of you must be just to be able to go from home to school.

Regards, Bruce

1 May 2004

Hi Bruce, I'm fine thanks. The final examination will be next week, I think my students are working hard for that. Though some of them said that no one is responding to them.

Today is my birthday, I'm 35 years now. I want to visit U.S.A., maybe someday if God wills.

Nawar

1 May 2004

Happy, Happy Birthday to you. Ah, 35. I wish I were 35 again! Actually, I think I am happier now than I was at 35. More settled, more calm. However, I did know more answers then! (Ha, ha.) I am too old and wise to think I know answers now.

You should know that whenever you get to New York you are welcome in our home. I would love to meet you in person. My wife and I will make a party and we will invite the students to come. There will always be a place for you in our hearts.

Bruce

2 May 2004

Oh Bruce. Thank you. Thank you. You are so delicate!

I remembered something about my students, which is that not all of them have easy connection with the café, and it is hard and dangerous to go there everyday.

Yesterday, two large vehicles were attacked near my house, it was really a shock ...

Yours, Nawar

12 May 2004

Nawar, ... the news of torture has affected me and my friends and my students greatly. We are sickened and embarrassed by such horrible actions. It seems too easy for some people to forget that they are dealing with people, regardless of politics and religion ... Through all of this I remain optimistic. I try to accept what I cannot change, and try to change what little I can, and that brings me back to the kids, and that always lets me feel a little better.

Peace be to you and yours, Bruce

17 May 2004

Hi Bruce, Many people asked me about the relation between us, what kind of project is this? And what for? But I believe in the Good power of man on earth, therefore, friendship to me is so important, this is my answer always ... Sometimes I miss your words. You are one of my best friends, really. We are human after all, and that's what friends are for.

Nawar

18 May 2004

Nawar, And it makes me feel good to hear from you.

Where were you educated so that you are now a teacher? My knowledge of Iraq is so poor. I thought that women were not allowed to go to school until recently.

The picture: I am the guy in the red shirt, and Marilyn is in front of me in the light blue blouse.

I hate pictures of myself because I am always surprised by how old I look, but I thought you might like to see this one. These are friends of ours who came to our house for a dinner party.

Regards, Bruce

24 May 2004

Hi Bruce, Sure I like to see this one! Thanks. I really wanted to see you. You are not the same person that I imagined, I thought you fat and huge! But you are completely different. How do you

think of me, guess how do I look like?

O.K., now your knowledge about Iraq and Iraqi women is so so poor! Women here are educated well, especially in the middle and north of the country. This doesn't mean that the women in the south and the west are not educated but some of them reach particular level or stage of education and stop because of some family or domestic circumstances such as marriage. I'm against that, but some people believe that women's responsibility lies in raising children because men do not fit in this difficult mission. As far as my family is concerned, my dear father is different, he always believe that woman has the ability to change the world itself. He keeps telling me if women are educated well, men will be born.

I have many sisters and all of them have different kinds of education: Press, Chemistry, Management and Technology. About my education, I have: Diploma, B.A and M.A in teaching. I have studied in my Iraq. So do you think that we are not allowed to go to school until recently!

Yours, Nawar

25 May 2004

Nawar, ... I have sent your letter on to the students after changing the subject to "a teacher teaches Mr. Wallace a few things" ... Many of us have a distorted view of what goes on in your part of the world. Don't forget how hard we are being told that we are bringing to you, with our great armies, a taste of freedom and liberation ...

Many of my students do not have a strong belief that they can become whatever they want. Their sense of hope has been taken away by their place in American society. We are a complex mix of people and not all are treated equally. Many of our poor lose hope long before they even enter school. Much of the job of what I call the True Teacher is to help give kids a sense of their self-worth, beyond the subject area content of what we teach. I think the story of your success will help some of them. Several of them already think highly of you as a brave teacher who carries on in the face of war. Somehow I think that you are becoming a role model for them ...

Peace to you and yours, Bruce

27 May 2004

Hi Bruce ... Something happened on our way to school this morning, I'd like to tell you and your students about it. A tank and two Humvees cut off our way to school on the highway. My students were frightened and asked to go back home. I refused and got off the school bus towards the soldiers. I knocked on the glass of the window to talk to the driver of the first vehicle. I asked him to let us pass because we have exam and students must be in time. He said: I understand but I can't let you go. Try another way or you have to wait! I repeat that we have exam and we are on the highway, there is no other way, only the way back home. He smiled and said: "Then go back home! I have orders to cut the road!" I saw many cars turned back but I insisted to go on, so I went to the other guy in the other vehicle and before talking to him our driver saw small cars passed away, neglecting the tank so he asked me to get in the bus and we continued our way to school. Me and the students felt proud. It's our country and we have the right to stop who wants to stop us even in a simple way. Most of the girls started to curse the CF [Coalition Forces] for their rudeness. I can't blame them.

Yours, Nawar

30 May 2004

Hello Bruce, It's a lie. What kind of Liberation & Freedom you are talking about? What is the benefit of legs when you cannot walk? What is the meaning of your life among tens of your people's bodies who are killed here and there? I don't dare and say that Saddam was good, but the situation here is more difficult. You cannot walk with your wife or sister or daughter in the street after six o'clock evening (unlike before), checkpoints everywhere, barbed wires surround each building, tanks in the streets instead of cars, armed men everywhere and above all you are sure if you go out you will return home a body!

This is so hard a feeling believe me.

I understand that freedom means respect others' opinions, rituals, religion, habits, beliefs: Respect what the difference means. Not enforcing people to do what others want to do. Oh Sir, don't tell me freedom or liberation. Your government declared it from the first moment its invasion. So how it comes invasion and freedom?

... I'm sorry. I don't want to hurt you. It's not your fault or even mine. Your country hurt also, but we are the victims of those who regard themselves powerful. We still live in the forest fearing the lion that will be eaten by worms one day.

Yours, Nawar

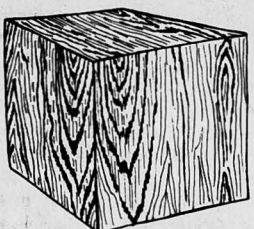
turn to BAGHDAD, page 15

MUNDANES

BY JOEL HOLLAND



I'VE BEEN WASHING WITH HOTEL SOAP.



WE FOUND THIS CRATE IN THE TRASH.

from BAGHDAD page 14

30 May 2004

Nawar, ... Many of us tried to stop the invasion before it started. We saw through the lies in the beginning. We failed. We are trying to influence our politicians to end the invasion. We have not yet been successful, that is true, but we are still trying. We march in protest; we write letters to politicians threatening to take away our vote if they don't act responsibly; we put money into advertising campaigns to educate the American people about the lies they are being told. We try, Nawar, we try, and it makes me cry that we have not had success. I cry for you, and I cry for the dumb Americans who are so easily fooled that they will let their children go to war for such lies.

I wear the cloth my government weaves, and sometimes I am shamed by it. We all suffer the blindness of our leaders. I weep when my government hurts so many. Did you not weep for the atrocities that Saddam committed which hurt so many?

But that is history, and the war is now, and it is horrible. Horrible that so many suffer—for any reason. More horrible that they suffer because of lies that are supposed to make it O.K. to invade your country. There is an invader in your country and until the armies leave you will not be able to steer your own ship, and that is the basic right of every nation. There is a war in your country, and until it is over there will be civilians caught in the hell that war always brings.

Nawar, please believe that I am on your side, and so are many Americans. No, we do not have control of the government now, and there are many Americans who still believe the lies that the Bush machine tells, but we are trying!

... Today I will bring a red rose of remembrance for my nephew Mitch who was killed on September 11th, 2001.

Today I will bring a second red rose. It will stand for the innocent people of Iraq who now

have a special place in my heart.
Bruce

31 May 2004

Peace upon you. It's so sad moments, I know. Please accept my late consolation and bring red flowers on behalf of me and all the Iraqi people.

I'm sorry about your nephew whose remembrance makes me remember my dear brother's death who was killed during war for nothing.

Oh, Bruce. We share the same suffering ...
Nawar

8 June 2004

Bruce, I don't know what to say. It is the puzzle of politicians, those who created this crime in the name of Freedom & Liberation. Do you believe that more than five bombs are exploded near my house everyday? We stopped closing the windows! Now you live this bloody puzzle with the Iraqi people ... three days ago I talked to a soldier (who was hiding behind a tree near the fence of my house) who thought that he is tough, doing good job here. I told him what kind of toughness you are talking about. You don't know your enemy. You are shooting randomly and killing children and innocent people. Why you are here? And for what? You brought your enemy with you and you fight him in our country and your government is proud of that!

It's a lie. I told you. We are victims. Sorry. I think you expect this melancholy from a person who lives in the middle of death! Ha, ha.

Nawar

BRUCE & NUMAIR

17 Mar 2004

Hi there, This is Numair speaking. How are you, Sir? I'm too glad to hear from people just like you, you and all the people behind the Pacific Ocean are more than welcome to talk, cooperate, and help the Iraqi students. Well, I'm 22 years old, a student at Baghdad University College of English ... I'm teaching the kids English language ...

Life is just like the woman. It has such a soft skin, but a murder, poisonous, it is a snake. We have to be careful watchful, we have to keep alive and survive. Sorry dear, sometimes I feel myself a philosopher, so do not care of my shit! I think if we do not smile we would die from sadness ...

With my kind regards, Numair

17 Mar 2004

Numair,

It is good to hear from you ... After the attacks of September 11, 2001, there was much bad feeling here about Moslem people. When the war on Iraq started there was confusion because many people could not believe that Iraq was the cause of the attacks—they wondered why we should go to war in Iraq. Our students are also confused. Some of them think that all Iraqi people hate us. I hope that this project will help both my students and your students get a better understanding of each other ...

Hopefully, Bruce Wallace

19 Mar 2004

Dear Mr. Wallace, First of all I want to

express my deep sorrow for you, and all the families who lost their sons fathers mothers in the attack of September 11. Be sure that we in Iraq felt sadness when the attack happened, and lots of people changed their minds about the attackers. We were feeling sympathy about them, but when they attack the civilian people, we realized that they are criminals whatever they are, dear sir ...

With my regards, Numair

In May, as the Abu Ghraib scandal broke and fighting intensified in Iraq, responses from the Iraqi students grew less frequent.

20 June 2004

Dear Mr. Bruce,
My students are on vacation these days, so they are at home. I see them by chance when I go shopping. They help me in carrying, and sometimes they accompany me to the buses, which go to my farm.

Now I'm working to help my family and others including myself about the situation in the future. I think it will be very good when they capture your president BUSH and put him in the jail to eat one bread every six hours and to drink a salty water with a bad smell, and a dark cell, not to shave for months, not to wash his clothes and not to clean his place which will be full of his shit and if I'm the jailer, I would celebrate with him at night on the Iraqi way and show him the stars at noon, and the sun at night, so as make him feel the misery that we are living in ...

Love & peace, Numair

A little more than a year after the war in Iraq began on March 20, 2004, the first emails from students were sent to the two school in Baghdad. They were translated into Arabic by the Iraqi teachers, responses were collected from students and translated into English, and the first replies came back a week or so later. By the time schools in both countries let out for summer, some students had written more than half a dozen letters to their counterparts in Iraq. Replies were sometimes delayed by logistics. Internet connections are scarce in Iraq, and one teacher had to make a trip of several dangerous miles to an Internet café in Baghdad to send his students' letters.

Most early emails read like teen personal ads: "i could describe myself a little hard working however take school very seriously ... i really hope that someday i could be a lawyer or journalist to really have and make a difference or play in a orchestra because i play the violin for the past 2 years its very hard to get in a college due to SAT scores you do not want to take if you decide to come to the U.S." Early responses indicate nothing so much as excitement to hear from the outside world: "i'm so happy to be in touch with you i hope to see you one day you come to my country or i go to yours ... thank you american." Food, music, school and sports were popular subjects. American students were often amazed at the good cheer of their Iraqi counterparts, even when leavened with caution: "hello student of U.S. ... i think baghdad is very beautiful if it has some peace."

SALIMA & RASHID

Early April 2004

Hi, My name is Salima. I am 15 years old. I am a student in tenth grade. The reason why I joined this program to interact with the people in Iraq and Afghanistan is because I am really curious to know what is going on in these countries, especially in this war. It's really something for us to be able to communicate with you guys. I really am sorry for the things that are

happening around the world today. Even though I haven't suffered in my life like you guys I could understand your pain. All we can do is hope for it to be over.

I forgot to tell you my interests. Well, I love to listen to music, help people in need and read sometimes. What are your interests? Well what is it that you really want? I don't really have anything else to say as of right now. Bye for now, hoping for a better tomorrow.

Sincerely, Salima

5 April 2004

Hi, my name is Rashid. My age is 16 years. I'm a student at the second year in a high school.

My hobby is to play football and I like to help people. Here in the Arabic homeland, life is so beautiful and simple, it is built on the bases of love and cooperation, we would love to be in touch with you and talk with everybody to express our ideas and thoughts. So what are your conditions there? You should tell me about it!

In Iraq we are suffering from a very hard situation, what do you think?

Goodbye.

5 April 2004

Hi Rashid, ... I am not sure if you have heard of this game called Cricket that's my favorite sport. ... Life in America is great. I mean you get a lot of freedom. It's really safe here in New York. I am really lucky to live in a place like New York. It's very beautiful here. I understand that you are suffering right now. I know how hard it is for you. All we could do is hope that everything turns out alright. I would like to know more about your family, your school life, and your everyday life, etc. I am really glad and excited, very excited to be able to communicate with a person like you in Iraq. I would really love to stay in touch as long as possible and know all about you and your thoughts ...

Waiting to hear back from you, Salima

18 April 2004

Hi Salima, How are you? I'm too happy, to hear your reply ... Yes I have heard about the cricket. I love it too. The situations in Iraq are getting more quiet day by day, the beautiful capital Baghdad, started to be more peaceful. I have two brothers, they are more young than me. I'm too old! I want to be a professor one day and teach the students in my country, in Iraq.

Thanks very much. Please send your picture if you can.

20 April 2004

Hi, Rashid

... I am glad to hear everything is getting peaceful. ... One time I had a goal similar like yours. Well, I wanted to be a doctor and treat the sick poor people in my village. But later on I realized I couldn't do that. Now I have a life here in U.S.A. I can't move from New York even if I wanted to. It's not like I don't like it here. It's a very beautiful place nice buildings, etc. But I want to move someplace quiet or go back to Bangladesh ...

Let's get back to the whole purpose of this thing. It's to get to know you better and the situations in Iraq and what's happening there right now. Well, I have two sisters and one brother. It seems to me that you don't have a sister and only two brothers. It's a very small family, which is good. ... Email me back, okay?

Salima

April 2004 saw an uprising among the followers of Shia cleric Moqtada el-Sadr, and May brought the Abu Ghraib scandal. Letters from Iraq slowed to a trickle, and many Brooklyn students wondered where the responses to their emails were.

My father's explanation was that fighting had intensified in Iraq, and this was probably what was holding up the letters.

28 May 2004

Hi Rashid,
... I haven't been sending you emails because you haven't replied my email yet. Well now I know why. It's because of the war and everything. I know, and I understand. I'm sorry I didn't email you even after I knew the reason why the mails were slow. I guess I was busy. That's my only excuse. I just wanted to see what is going on in Iraq at this time. I know you can't write to me right now but you could write to me all about it once everything cools down. I hope everything is all right with you. Keep your hopes open. Insh'Allah, Allah will do something about all this. Just don't give up your hopes. Next time you email me, don't forget to write to me all about it.

Waiting for your email, Salima

FAIZAH & BASHAD

30 Mar 2004

Al Salam Alaikum, Hello, my name is Faizah. Mr. Wallace, a teacher in my school, told me that I have the opportunity to write to an Iraqi teenager, and I was very happy to hear that. I would like to briefly introduce myself. I am Palestinian, and I was born in Saudi Arabia (and, yes, I can speak Arabic!). I moved to America a little more than five years ago. I never went back to Palestine or Saudi Arabia since, but I hope to go back to Palestine this summer. I am 15 years old and I am in the tenth grade. I would like to know more about you. Please write me back, because I would love to talk to you. Salaam.

5 April 2004

In the name of God most gracious most merciful, al salam alaikum, my name is Bashad, I'm 14 years old. I'm a student at the second year at the secondary school. I would love to know you, and I would love to wish you all the best. I love the Palestinian people as well as the people of Saudi Arabia. I hope that you will be back to Palestine your home. I like your way in speaking in spite of I have never heard you speaking!

I'm a Kurdish Iraqi. Thank you Faizah, I love you.

6 April 2004 10:08:14

In the name of Allah most Gracious, most Merciful, Dear Bashad, Thank you so much for replying back. I love the Iraqi people, too. I think that we share a lot of things in common, because we are both of oppressed people struggling for freedom and human rights. May Allah protect us from harm and grant us eternal peace and happiness. I don't know if I'll be able to go to Palestine this summer. It's going to be really hard, and I'm very upset. Insh'Allah I can go as soon as possible. Thank you again for writing back, Bashad. Please keep in touch and stay same. May Allah be with you. Salaam.

Love, Faizah

18 April 2004

In the name of God most gracious most

WEALTH

What an embarrassment of riches, I'd say if I were Charles Dickens out on the moor, the fog thicker than the foam from a pint of ale, thieves and scoundrels everywhere. Everywhere the brawling torrents of filth, the slovenly poor huddled in some dingy room.

It's too embarrassing to say the English novel was raised on stale bread and dirty water. Not even Ruskin starved for beauty or had to dip his pen into the bubbling ferment of the Thames. And so the poor tossed their garbage out the windows

so often that the wandering writer had to stay alert. Whichever way one looked another crumbling building seemed to assure a comfortless life, all while the lowly idlers some wretch mutter in the corner.

Dickens had his desk aligned with the North Star thinking it might guide his pen. Most of his characters needed a bath and you could smell the poverty from the first page; scratch and sniff novels, occasionally informed by a gust of sweetened air.

—CHRISTIAN ROBERTS

merciful, Dear Faizah, I love your words, and I love the Palestinian people. We will struggle as you said for their human rights. I hope that you will send me your picture. I want to ask you some questions. Do you watch the Star Academy program, or another Arabic programs?

With my love, Bashad

20 April 2004

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, Dear Bashad, I'm so glad that you write back to me. I think this is wonderful that I am able to communicate with an Iraqi youth, because I've never had an Iraqi friend before, so I feel blessed. I watch the news all the time these days and it frustrates me a lot. When I see what's going on in our countries I feel so upset and give up in everything. However, yesterday I went to a demonstration against the occupation in Palestine. We chanted "Free Palestine" and we also chanted "Free Iraq" as well as other countries. I was on the news and expressed my feelings towards this issue.

But anyway, I don't watch Star Academy ... What channel is it on? I have Arabic TV but I don't have all the channels ... Keep in touch and be safe.

Love and Peace to you and all your people, Faizah

With the help of a software program, Faizah and Bashad begin exchanging letters in Arabic.

8 May 2004

Faizah, Thank you Faizah for your worry about us, I want to tell you that we feel the same thing towards the people in Palestine, we think about you and we pray to God to keep and protect you, your Palestinian dialect was really nice and soft, I think it has more taste than the classical Arabic, all the students were jealous of me because your message which needs no translation to be read, and all the students are too excited to participate in the project but not every one is as lucky as me. Hope to talk to you again.

12 May 2004

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, Dear brother Bashad, Thank you for replying to me. Praise be to Allah for you and your friends and family are well I hope. I follow your news constantly. I swear when I heard about the Iraqi prisoners, I lost my mind. I was reading the newspaper and I was crying.

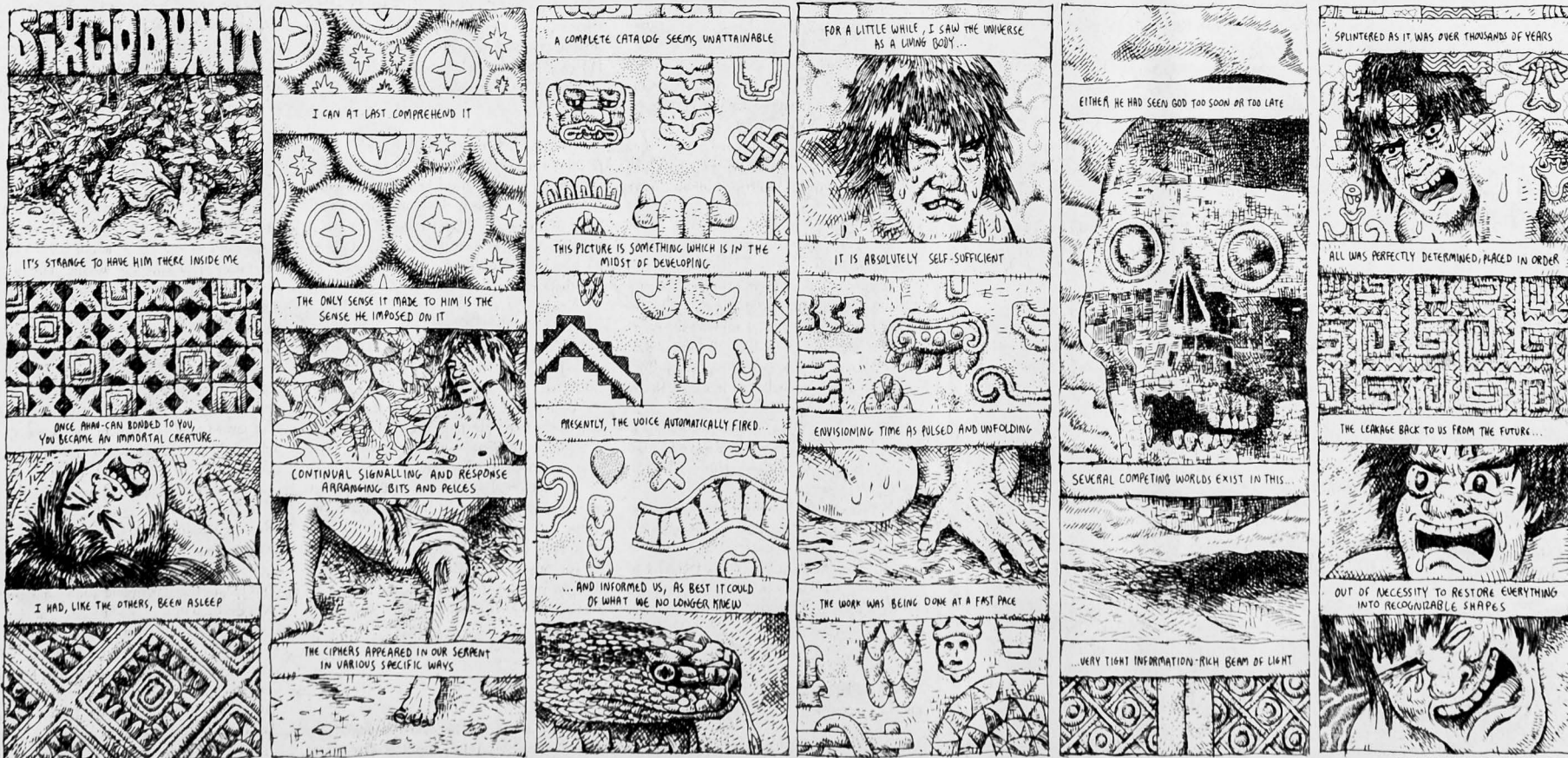
Thank you for the commentary on the Palestinian dialect. I wish I could write in classical Arabic. I was born in Saudi Arabia and stayed there ten years before I came here, so I forgot most of the language. I want to ask, what do you think about changing the Iraqi flag?

Say hi to everyone.

Faizah

Though the project is on hold for the summer, my father expects it to resume once school starts again in the fall. "I thought this project was all about logistics and getting the mail in and out and keeping track of who's writing who and making sure that people have letters," he told me recently. "What I didn't expect was to feel the same things the students feel. Their feeling about the war has changed drastically. When they hear about a car bombing in Baghdad, they know that the people they're writing to may be directly affected by this any day, and this moves them a great deal in a way that was unexpected to them, and also unexpected to me."

Bruce Wallace can be reached through www.peacefultomorrow.org. Mark Wallace is a freelance writer based in New York City. His work has appeared in The New York Times Magazine and The New Yorker.



A

Art & Letters

L

NUBS OF YELLOW BEAK CRACK THE SILENT WHITE SHELL

DOUCET'S JOURNAL

During the 1990s, Canadian artist Julie Doucet published twelve issues of the comic book *Dirty Platte*. With her obsessive eye for detail, Doucet covered everything from painfully intimate autobiographical moments with friends and lovers to surreal gender-twisting dreams in which she names her newly acquired penis "Mustang" and proceeds to use it as a flower vase. The following are three previously unpublished pages from Doucet's journal, which she kept for exactly one year, from November 2002 until November 2003. Keeping this journal proved such an exhausting effort that since then, Doucet has nearly stopped drawing altogether, focusing instead on collages and writing. The journal is currently being re-lettered and translated into English, and will be published sometime next year.



Julie Doucet, Dominique Pétrin & Geneviève Castrée

THREE PEAS IN THE SNOW

This month, Space 1026 presents the work of three Canadian artists: Julie Doucet, Dominique Pétrin and Geneviève Castrée. Their work seamlessly moves through drawing, printmaking, sculpture and performance (Pétrin is a member of the band Les Georges Leningrad, and Castrée's latest book, *Pamplemoussi*, is accompanied by a vinyl record of her music.) The three artists share a penchant for cartoony figuration, bright colors and femininity, with the work ranging from the winsome to the obscene.

INTERVIEW BY COURTNEY DAILEY

Courtney Dailey: Who inspires your art?

Julie Doucet: The Fort Thunder guys.

Dominique Pétrin: Jean Cocteau, Fassbinder, the garbage, the TV and the books. Yesterday it was Georges Bataille. Most of the things that inspired me in the past years were found in the movies. I like to see my art as the screen at a drive-in cineparc. One day I'd like to paint a whole movie screen with all my Greek gods and whores, so it will look like a fresco by Jerome Bosch, a little Fellini *Satyricon*.

Geneviève Castrée: Julie and Dominique have both been inspirational to me. I'm mostly inspired by my friends, the people around me.

CD: What can art do?

JD: Very softly whisper something you never heard into your ear...

DP: It can make you wear green pants with pink high heels for a week, and then suddenly, you embroider a t-shirt with the words "gray-day", dress in gray all day, and then the next day you decide to build your own coffin with paper drops. I made a banana peel dress for my band. I built my own church. Art is everywhere and in anything.

GC: Looking at or listening to or watching what some other person has done sometimes reveals the details that you have been looking for. For instance, if you have a friend who is shy in this weird way, who always talks funny to hide themselves, you might get a better picture of what is happening in their head by reading something they've written or listening to a personal song they did.

CD: Where has art taken you?

JD: Outside of art school.

DP: Far far away. Rules are no-rules. Free as a bird. Happiness is the best.

GC: Different places. Places I had once only read about in *National Geographic* magazine.

CD: When do you like to make things?

JD: Every morning.

DP: Alone. No other human beings. Night. Bat-cave. Music: Art ensemble of Chicago, Wolf eyes, or Messiaen. Or Jazz, Jazz, Jazz. On the kitchen table with chocolate cookies. When I go to bed, I dream of colors.

GC: I try to draw all day, but usually the magic happens right after a light dinner and lasts until bedtime. I get really busy when I am home alone. It is pure joy to belt out and know that no one can hear you.

CD: Why do you want to show your work?

JD: For me it all started with fanzines, then books, which are good ways to show your work but hide behind it. I never liked to attract attention. I'm not comfortable with putting my work on a gallery wall. I remember at the university this woman said that if there wasn't a public, she wouldn't create. I totally disagreed with that. Personally, I don't think showing is crucial.

DP: Because I need to communicate, and I am proud of what I do. This is what my brain can do the best. This is my function in the society. Necessity. Ego wants to be patted. Need of achievement.

GC: Because, well, to be honest... the act of drawing is for myself only. I always think I'm really funny while I draw. I hate showing something that is unfinished. It makes me feel self-conscious, like giving up. But then as soon as it is done, I really want to get someone else's opinion, because I am a human and I like to be liked. It feels amazing when somebody else 'gets it.'

CD: What do you like to do when it's snowing?

JD: I like the sound it makes when I walk in it, when the weather is very cold. I like the absence of noise when it snows. I like when snowflakes melt on my face. I like to walk.

The minute I see it snowing outside I have to get out of the house, even and especially when it's a storm.

DP: Pour some maple syrup and eat it with my grandma. Walk with my Eskimo boots and feel warm and powerful.

GC: I like to make soup, eat soup, drink coffee, go outside for a walk, be in love, take pictures of my friends in their winter coats.

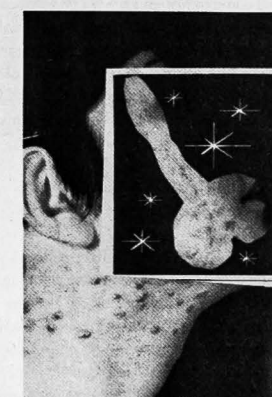
CD: When does it snow?

JD: From beginning of November to end of April, please.

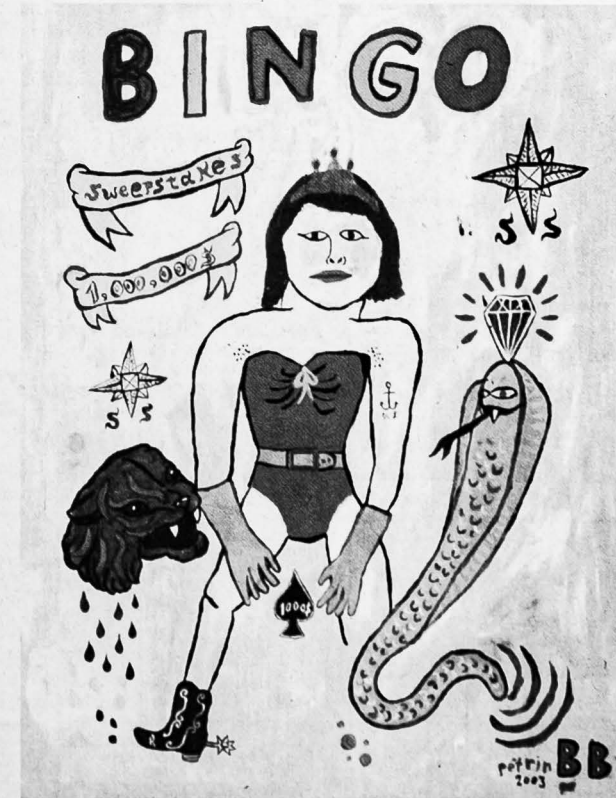
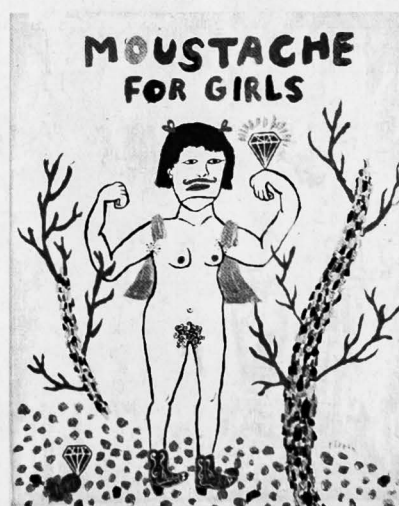
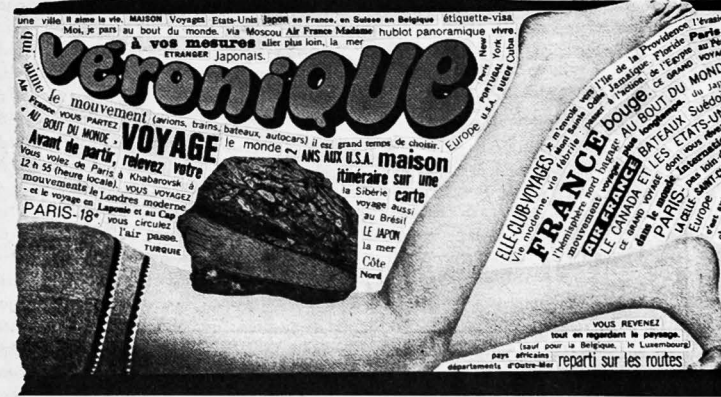
DP: It snows when you are in love.

GC: The last snow we had was on January 5th and 6th. Once a year, if you are lucky. When I was little, in Quebec, the last snowstorm of the year would always fall on my birthday, in early April. It would keep people from being able to come to my birthday party.

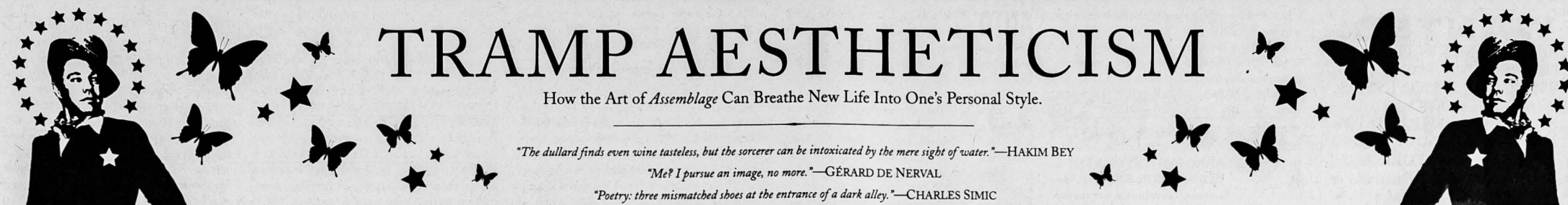
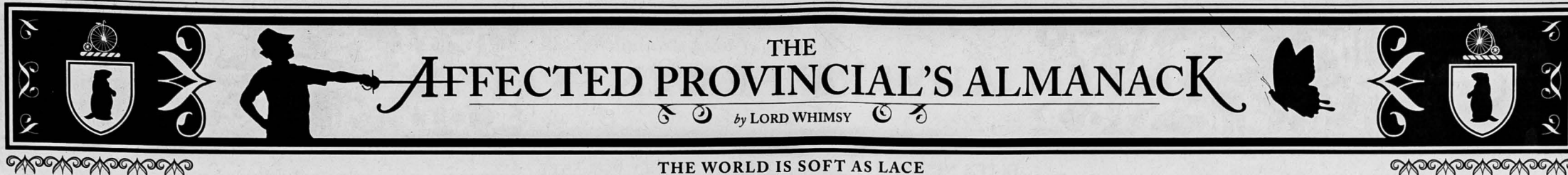
Trois Papis Dans La Neige (Three Peas in the Snow) opens at Space 1026, 1026 Arch Street, on September 3rd.



ELLE-HUMOUR



Top two: Geneviève Castrée. Middle two: Julie Doucet. Bottom two: Dominique Pétrin.



"The dullard finds even wine tasteless, but the sorcerer can be intoxicated by the mere sight of water."—HAKIM BEY

"Me? I pursue an image, no more."—GÉRARD DE NERVAL

"Poetry: three mismatched shoes at the entrance of a dark alley."—CHARLES SIMIC

IN THE COURSE OF CARRYING OUT MY DUTIES as *arbitrator elegantiarum*, I encounter many impecunious aesthetes *manqués* who appear to be in the grips of blackest sartorial despair. Upon my arrival, these lost souls gather about my feet and beseech me for deliverance from their wretched state: "My good Whimsy! I am but a poor lad who cannot afford tailored clothing and other such fine things that might mark me as a fancy boy and improve my social station. Collecting perfumes only provides me with temporary comfort, and assuming elegant poses without the proper attire serves only to confuse people. Oh Whimsy, is there any hope for the likes of me?"

This needless self-flagellation must cease, for to equate money with style is in grave error: surely, money can grant easy passage to the more exclusive luxuries and rarefied pleasures, but it is by no means the sole path to a life of enchantment (of which I am intimately familiar, for I am *most* enchanting). If one's means are truly limited, then I would suggest the time-honored aesthete's practice of seeking flowers amidst the dross of this world, found most commonly in discount stores, flea markets, estate sales, auctions, vintage haberdasheries, thrift stores and consignment shops. I am speaking here of Tramp Aestheticism, the *arte povera* of dandyism.

For those who scoff at such a notion as being anathema to an exalted state the likes of Dandyism, I would ask the following: what true artist would not relish the challenge of creating a compelling body of work from a limited palette?

If the nuances are not found in a dandy's clothes, then they are surely found in *how* they are worn. Instead of abandoning dandyism altogether, perhaps one has but to change the emphasis of one's dandyism: if one does not have rarefied things, then one must regard them in a *rarefied way*. The beauty is then found in the *relationships*, not the pieces themselves. One becomes a walking rebus, enigmatic and inscrutable: a cake too pretty to eat.

The practice of Tramp Aestheticism goes back to the street swells of 1830's London, whose meager earnings did not dampen their desire for bright plumage. Tramp Aestheticism is a *kind* of Dandyism—perhaps a low sort, but Dandyism nonetheless. This economically modest practice has the added value of allowing the dandy to better concentrate on his art by liberating him from the vulgar complications and entanglements which often come with expensive couture, such as fleeing the country to avoid one's creditors, or turning one's parlor air yellow with bile-laden expletives upon receiving a crippling bill in the post. With this in mind, even the exquisites among us whose means might allow for lofty luxuries should engage in this pastime, if for nothing else but the sheer joy of extracting beauty from the commonplace. If one so chooses, this may be accomplished without the tiresome snark of aestheticism's callow children, Irony and Camp. (The candy-colored region of 'Tramp Camp' can be tricky terrain, as it overlaps both the realms of Dandyism and its neighbor, Drag—see the *Camp/Aestheticism Continuum* for a deeper

investigation of this relationship). Irony and Camp can be good fun, but we must also give ourselves permission to experience pleasure without the aid of these ever-present postmodern implements.

I must confess that there are more second-hand items in my own wardrobe than I would care to admit: even my high-crowned straw hat for which I am well-known was once a *pot* for an orchid plant. Selection has never been better, as older gentlemen seem to do me the favor of shriveling down to my diminutive size before taking leave of their earthly wardrobes (perhaps in time, I might pass the favor on to some dapper midget who has yet to be born). There is something quite pleasing about giving an object a second life; to provide a common object with an *uncommon thought*, to para-paraphrase Duchamp.

Creating a unique appearance for one's self is to depart from the gray shores of fashion into the vast expanse of style. It is a perilous undertaking, and the ways in which one might fail in these endeavors are too numerous to mention here. That said, those among us who return with our hulls full of riches after navigating such treacherous waters should serve as an inspiration to those who may be just beginning to fumble with their brand-new compasses and sextants.

The uniqueness of one's collection is an essential aspect of stylish wear; this uniqueness can either be achieved through acquiring expensive, bespoke pieces (money), or through the obscurity of vintage or consignment pieces (time), which incidentally are often of superior

workmanship to newer items (I'm looking at you, Tommy). Wrapping oneself in the rarely-noticed visual poetry of hand-stitched embroidery, glistening inner linings, and buttons with the perfect amount of patina is a private paradise; a secluded treasure, like an oyster harboring a milky pearl. The rare observer who takes the time to notice such details in one's dress shall be richly rewarded, as is true of all great art. Is there nothing more impressive than to catch a glimpse of a beautifully-lined suit jacket that has, up until then, remained scrupulously out of sight? It is as if a man briefly lifts his chapeau to wipe his brow, and one accidentally spies a halo hovering over his crown!

One should not make the mistake of completely abandoning the pursuit of new pieces altogether, as they are essential to lending freshness and substance to the *boulevardier's* wardrobe. To bolster newer pieces with sundry items from reputable second-hand shops is a favored practice for those whose means do not allow for daily purse-flattening visits to the temples of fashion. Such finds often give a delicious tension to one's ensemble: texture, color, context and cut are all vital elements in one's sartorial palette when combining items from disparate sources. Vintage pieces often have the added advantage of lacking those awful miniature advertisements found on most contemporary clothes, and hence do not diminish the dignity of the wearer (or the viewer, for that matter).

Selecting spotless consignment pieces—or perhaps items with a tasteful evidence of time's

passing—is nothing short of an art form. Beware of imperfections, wear and blemishes which might detract from your acquisitions; to ignore these details can be disastrous to one's reputation. While touching on themes can be an effective device for the advanced practitioner, avoiding a head-to-toe look in a single period style is advisable for those who have yet to cultivate a sufficiently rich and varied repertoire, for a less than deft hand at such things can demote any outfit to a costume (For more on this subject, refer to my accompanying essays on *Continuity vs. Nostalgia* and the *Camp-Aestheticism Continuum*).

An effective means by which to forge an individual style is to combine two or three complimentary themes to form a new hybrid look which one may call their own. Be sure to synthesize and occasionally vary your themes, but maintain an underlying sensibility. What this might precisely entail is up to the individual, but variation within these themes is vital to the clarity of one's physical persona. Make no mistake: the public squares and boulevards are *theater*, and the general public should be able to discern the characters on the streets from one another, even if they have changed wardrobes between acts. One's instincts will often dictate these elusive undertones; indeed, one may find that they embody a certain sensibility without fully understanding it.

I would recommend to those gentlemen of a smaller stature like myself to explore the items made for the Fairer Sex, as the selection of styles is much more broad and the fit is often more

snug and flattering than most men's attire (the jackets are often cut shorter in the torso, which often lengthens the silhouette and keeps a man of diminutive stature safely on the far side of the Gary Coleman Index). One can have such items customized by one's tailor, but divining the proverbial diamond in the rough is a true skill that is born of a disciplined design sense and an encyclopedic, intuitive knowledge of where and how styles might best combine.

A visual hierarchy is essential to dress; one must be selective about which items in one's outfit are punctuated, lest it descend into a cacophony, thus obliterating all carefully-crafted nuance. To illustrate what I mean by hierarchy, I shall use one of my casual street ensembles as an example: an alpine green leather frock coat with epaulet straps and its generous lapels holding a pale orchid; a crisp, white shirt with red floral embroidery and heroic cuffs; blue flared corduroy trousers; oversized, tastefully weathered (but polished) ebony ankle boots to lengthen the leg and accentuate the drape of the trousers; and the boots lined with soft, white dove's feathers for unimpeded strides. One of the few blessings of our age is its capacity for playful eclecticism, but such eclecticism should always be employed so as to give one a timeless, clean, elegant and nonchalant appearance.

So I say unto the youth: dry your eyes, and remember that the tireless search for enchantment itself is the mark of the true aesthete. Do not cease until you have become a poetic object, a living museum of fancy. You are the canvas—paint!

CONTINUITY vs. NOSTALGIA

Why the Riches Bequeathed by Previous Ages Must Accompany Us Into The Future.

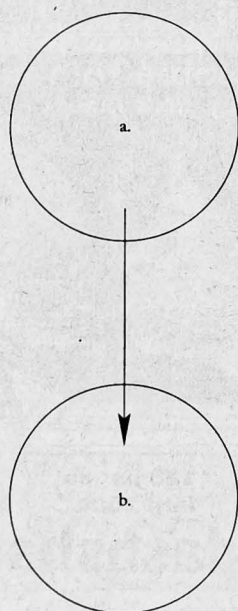


FIG.1: Nostalgia

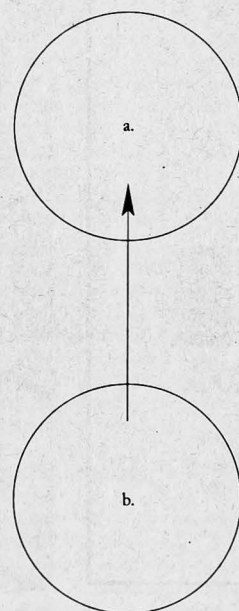


FIG.2: Continuity

NOSTALGIA: THE SCARLET LETTER OF OUR TIME. It is the weapon of choice for the chattering classes when they wish to paint an idea with a coat of irrelevance. Those judged as trafficking in this illicit substance are suspected of commanding a cultural rear-guard action—possibly the worst of all modern sins. Naturally, as someone who has written recent articles on such things as Retrosexuality and Absinthe, I am at some risk of being convicted of such heresies. In my defense, I would say that there are some important distinctions to be made between Nostalgia and its more sophisticated cousin, Continuity.

Perhaps part of the reason why certain subjects are seen as nostalgic is due in part to our own age's hostility or indifference towards the past. By 'past', I mean beyond the most recent four decades, which seem to be regurgitated with an increasing frequency, like a poodle that has just eaten the same oyster for the fifth time. The prevailing ethos of our day does not value the notion of Continuity, rejecting much of what has come before as obsolete: the 'paper towel theory' of history, if you will. This was originally a bohemian conceit, but it has found a firm place in the minds of the average civilian, and has become the status quo. The neglect or misuse of the past is now thought of as the very definition of modernity; outside of the occasional costume drama or public holiday, we now dismiss any connection with the past as being weepy and sentimentalist—that is to say, nostalgic. Granted, the past has not been banished, but it is currently treated with indifference and neglect, like the flea-bitten burro tied to the last, rickety wagon in the caravan.

Generally speaking, the distinction between Nostalgia (Fig. 1) and Continuity (Fig. 2) is as follows: Nostalgia yearns to bring the present (a.) to the past (b.); Continuity wishes to bring the past (b.) to the present (a.). Nostalgia is detached from the world, stagnant and never

changes, whereas Continuity is engaged with the world and is in constant flux, combining what has been with what shall be. Nostalgia is a glib, vulgar appropriation of the past, a *shlick*; Continuity is a more sophisticated, profound internalization of the past, a *synthesis*.

The appropriation of older sartorial and artistic forms should be a function of Continuity (outfit), not Nostalgia (costume). For instance, the attire and accoutrements I don as befitting my office as Ambassador of Heaven and Sissy Avatar often have 19th century influences, but such finery is intended for a modern application, much like the anachronistic priestly vestments seen in places of worship. These 'vestments' lend a ceremonial gravity and resonance to my public speaking engagements; in short, the writing requires a kind of quasi-shamanic, heightened concentration of self. Besides, I am rather fond of velvet.

Playing with and adopting older modes of dress is fair game, as long as doing so doesn't become an *article* of faith, to pardon the pun. While one should have a deep appreciation for history, the earnest desire to return to a previous age is misguided. We should, however, be free to avail ourselves to all of Civilization's blessings, regardless if they are two days or two millennia in age. This endless bounty is our inheritance, our birthright—we should enjoy it!

If borrowing from the past can make us more gracious people, then so much the better. We continually adopt from other cultures to enrich ourselves—why not other *times*? Perhaps by cobbling together what was best about all of our previous ages, we might improve our collective lot in the present. After all: is this not the idea behind Civilization *itself*? Nostalgia can afford us fleeting pleasures, but it is not where the future lies. Embrace Continuity!

CAMP vs. AESTHETICISM

Or, A Brief Analysis of the SCHISM Of THEORY Within Dandyism.

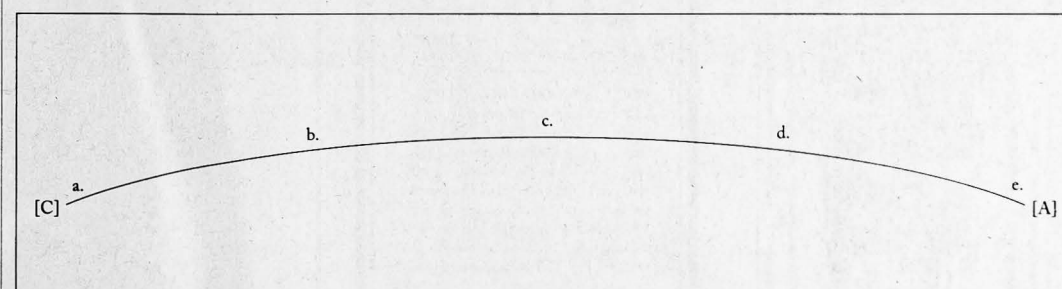


FIG.1

DEPICTED ABOVE IS A DIAGRAM outlining the Continuum within Dandyism; specifically, that which lies between the poles of Aestheticism [A] and its more recent counterpart, Camp [C].

The sister realms of Aestheticism and Camp continue well beyond the modest scope of Dandyism; yet as each has developed, Dandyism remains one of the points where these two spheres are still conjoined. Aestheticism was the first major development within Dandyism, followed later by its inverted cousin, Camp. While Aestheticism prizes the sensitivity and self-cultivation necessary to appreciate the refined and rare, Camp takes joy in its broad knowledge of popular culture and its ability to laugh in the face of the vulgar and overstated. Camp, a reaction to modern mass culture, embraces popular culture instead of withdrawing from it, like Aestheticism. Camp knows that what it simultaneously lampoons and celebrates is in bad taste, but its raucous, theatrical fatuousness brings such appropriations to a new level of absurdity; it attempts to playfully commemorate the stupid and ephemeral, but in an intelligent way. Conversely, Aestheticism finds the quiet, intense joy that comes from a sincere appreciation of the sublime in nature and culture to be much more fulfilling and worthwhile.

Those seeking purity on this Continuum may look in vain, for Aestheticism and Camp will be found throughout Dandyism, albeit in varying proportions; they are both essential to the enigma and nuance that is necessary for Dandyism. The reason for this is simple: pure Camp is too shrill, and pure Aestheticism is too earnest to sustain such a delicately nuanced flower as a dandy; there must be a mixture of both playful detachment and feverish love flowing through one's veins, the proportions of which comprise this Continuum.

The position to the far left (a.) would be inhabited by those most flamboyant, overstated exponents of Dandyism, some of whom go so far as to flirt with Drag itself. Most modern dandies weigh in heavily on this end, as Camp is often the point where Dandyism and popular culture meet. Most 'civilians' today are only aware of the Camp end of Dandyism, as it is the quarter whose forms are most appropriated by performers and entertainers. Female Dandies who employ elements of Drag as a point of entry into the largely male idiom of Dandyism often fall about this range initially, but in time may be found anywhere on the Continuum (more on gender *vis-à-vis* Dandyism in a future article). Patrick McDonald, Simon Doonan, John Waters and other gay icons are strongly represented here.

The next point (b.) would mark those who trade in Camp, largely humorists or satirists, but for one reason or another do not embody the flippant extremes found in the far reaches of Camp. Wilde may be placed here due in part to his inability to completely break from Aestheticism; he may have been a major progenitor of the Camp sensibility, but his vanguard position has since been superseded by more flamboyant forms of Camp seen over the past century (a phenomenon which, for our purposes, will be

referred to in this tract as 'Camp Drift'). Quentin Crisp might be placed here, since one might say he spent his early life within the far realm of Camp, but then drew from Aestheticism in his later life as a writer and public figure. The humorist Saki might also be a likely inhabitant in this region. Point (b.) is a place for those who are indifferent to world affairs, but dead serious about the wit of their aphorisms.

The center of the Continuum (c.) is likely the cradle of Dandyism, existing before Baudelaire's theories and the advent of Camp's bombast; here we find the wellspring of Dandyism, Beau Brummell. The center would likely belong to those who employ both branches in equal measure, as in the case of Cecil Beaton, Max Beerbohm or Noel Coward, or are indifferent to either end, like perhaps the post-Edwardian dandies, 'Bright Young Things', 'Deco Dandies' and others in the early 20th Century who came after Aestheticism's ascendancy but before the blazing supremacy of Camp.

The midpoint into Dandyism's more contemplative wing, Aestheticism (d.) is largely represented by artists, epicureans, voluptuaries and hedonists: those influenced by the creed of Aestheticism, but perhaps prefer instead to focus more on their rarefied pleasures. Gerard de Nerval, Robert de Montesquiou, Whistler, Manet and Jean Lorrain might be apt choices. As deeply moved as they might be by moonlight dancing through porcelain, they prize sensation above ideas.

The far end of Aestheticism (e.) would likely be the 'theory jocks' of Dandyism: those who have actively and vigorously embraced the ethos of Aestheticism and its ilk, such as Theophile Gautier, D'Aureville and especially Baudelaire. This area constitutes some of the more 'Gallic' strains of Dandyism, favoring elegance, nuance, austerity, and intense inner rapture. The outer reaches of Aestheticism is often where twined conversations over the finer points of *La Peinture de la Moderne Vie* or *La Dandyisme* might be heard lilting through the cloisters.

Naturally, such delineations as these are fluid at best, and indeed many dandies inhabit many points along this Continuum during the course of their careers.

The swing of the pendulum between the poles of Aestheticism and Camp have allowed for a wide variation of form and theory within Dandyism; that having been said, one wonders how much further the Continuum can be stretched before the core principles are too diffuse to hold the definition of Dandyism together. One suspects that we are at the zenith of Dandyism's scope, and that the expansion brought about by the emergence of Aestheticism and Camp might now be complete. This should not be seen as a death knell for Dandyism, for Dandyism thrives within self-imposed constraints, and the oscillation between Aestheticism and Camp will likely provide the necessary vitality, as it has in the past.

Recommended reading: Susan Sontag's *Notes on Camp* (1964).

GENERAL ADVERTISEMENTS

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WANTED:

ADVERTISEMENTS, PROJECTS, PROSPECTUSES, MAPS, PLANS, SCHEMES, MANIFESTOS, CHARTERS, CHARTS, DIAGRAMS, FLYERS, PLEAS, REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS, ASSOCIATIONS, PLEAS, THE FUTURE, & C:

DEAR PHILADELPHIA: This is the place to announce what you're doing, about to do, hope to do, or are considering doing. An army 10,000 strong will gather behind you. Your in-box will overflow. If you need it, ask for it. If you have it, offer it up. We are all broken, but maybe running the right General Advertisement can make us whole again. Post your bill or flyer here. Take a breath and summon the thing into being by enunciating the words that will make it real. I urge you, I urge you strongly, to take advantage of this opportunity immediately. Send your FREE GENERAL ADVERTISEMENT to editors@philadelphiaindependent.net immediately to run in our October issue. There is no limit on length but we reserve the right to edit but only rarely do we exercise this right. We're also taking ads for stuff for sale, rooms to let, shout-outs, love yous, hate yous, help wanteds, lovelorn pleas, etc. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter. Use the classified as a message in a bottle, cast into a gray paper sea, or an ink footprint on a gray paper moon. It matters not, so long as you send your free classifieds to editors@philadelphiaindependent.net. Immediately. Now! I thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Sincerely yours, HENRY FLOSS, Auxiliary Classified Compiler & Comptroller.

ACTORS & AUTO WANTED: Local filmmaker to be shooting project in the Greater Philadelphia Areas in February. Seeking female to play role of a 20 year old. All types and builds are welcome to apply. Also seeking extras and on-set Production Assistants. Little to no experience

is just fine, but patience and enthusiasm are paramount. Regarding the Automobile: Seeking a convertible Volkswagen Karmann Ghia, circa 1960s. Please send all headshots, photographs, resumes, and contact information to: "D.O.A.S.", Attn: Reed Meyer, c/o H&P 811 W. 7th Street, Suite 1000, Los Angeles, CA 90017

ATTENTION:

APARTMENTS FOR RENT & HOUSES FOR SALE: I have several apartments for rent for reasonable prices, also houses for rent/sale, and, if you want to make that big step to build your dreams, you may want land so you can build your pyramid or treehouse or Dr. Seuss-inspired castle. I also have some houses in "shell" condition so you can do a rehab that is not related to drugs. See www.geocities.com/gasheart or www.geocities.com/gasheart/lot or call 215-485-1015. Financing info available to help you to help yourself.

ART STUDIOS & APARTMENTS FOR RENT: The city of Burlington, right on the Delaware River between New York and Philly, is a remarkable, unpolished gem. It feels very much like South Street in the '70s... affordable spaces on a groovy old street, with the added bonus of being right on the river! The Rivers Edge Arts League is working to steer the arts community in Jersey, Philly and New York towards these spaces. For more info or a free tour of the town, email us at reversedgears@yahoo.com

AUDIENCE WANTED: New Music Venue in search of Unique Soul and Identity: Open scarcely a year, the newly built Millcreek Tavern at 4200 Chester Ave. seeks inspired, enthusiastic lovers of audio adventure to help determine the upcoming programming, atmosphere, and overall quality of said establishment by attending shows there. We have the stage, the P.A. system and the bar, but what is missing is you, dear reader. In particular, denizens of West Philadelphia are encouraged to visit us as we are splendidly located not far from you. After Labor Day, Wednesday evenings will feature free soul music courtesy of the Blue Method, and Thursdays always feature live entertainment without a cover. Thrifty and refreshing drink specials are featured from 10pm-midnight. Please visit us online at <http://millcreektavern-philly.com> for more information on our schedule and booking enquiries.

AUTO FOR SALE: I am selling a 1995 Buick Century that has about 89,000 miles on it. It's a station wagon, it's blue, and it has that fake wood paneling on the sides. Do you need a car? This might be the car for you. Things you can do with this car: 1. Drive to the beach. 2. Drive out to the country in the autumn, go apple picking, and fill up the back with freshly picked apples. 3. Back! Seat! Memories! 4. Listen to mix tapes with that warm Buick factory stereo sound that makes every album sound like 1996 all over again. 5. Drive a small family somewhere far. 6. Lay down the seats and take a nap near a country road. 7. Get back to your apartment late at night after the El stops running. 8. And so on! I am selling this car for 2,000 dollars or best offer. It's in great condition. Well, it needed a new alternator but I put one in just a week ago. This is a 1990s car so once the 1990s Retro thing hits hard, who knows how much these kinds of cars are going to go for? That's why it's time to get in on the ground floor before it's too late. Buy 1990s Products Now! Anyone interested, please get in touch ASAP. Write me at erikbader@earthlink.net. This car is available for sale immediately. Thank you.

AUTO FOR SALE: The Brady Bunch Muscle Car. For sale, absolutely bitchin', much beloved 1972 Dodge Coronet wagon, all original, deep red color, all black and white interior. This is one fun rig! Interior is perfect, the seats, the dash, the headliner, the arm rests even... all perfect. 99,000 original miles. Underneath is entirely rust free. Runs great. Non smoking family of happy groovesters have towed a vintage trailer with this car all over the country! Our wagon deserves a home with someone cool and happy. No grumps, no mopes, no creeps, no dopes. It deserves to be parked somewhere where there is a garage or a carport or some sort of cover. \$3,800 firm. Call Todd at 609-386-8786

BAR WANTED: Dandy seeks Tenure. Lord Whimsy, Philadelphia's irrepressible man about town, is now accepting 'ambassadorship' solicitations from suitably natty establishments that feel His Exalted Presence to be a potential boon to their prestige. Any cafe, restaurant or bar in the city where his Lordship might be guaranteed comfort, breathable air, physical safety, lively conversation and access to an assort-

ment of French herbal liqueurs—especially Green Chartreuse—may apply. Refined, congenial environments preferred. Bastions of the 'high five' need not apply.

BEACH HOUSE FOR RENT: Attention, jaded Philly urbanites: Looking to get away from it all for a week or three? Come to Wildwood-by-the-Sea, NJ, where the beach is free! Enjoy delicious vintage 1950s and 1960s pop architecture motels and restaurants, or homey Victorian cottages. Take a long bike ride to the Angelsea Lighthouse or down to Sunset Lake with the soft sea breeze streaming over your face. Spend all your quarters playing pinball or DDR at the boardwalk. But first, call Gallagher Real Estate to arrange a sweet rental at a price you won't regret. We have rentals to fit every size and budget. (609) 522-5757 or www.gallagher-realestate.com. The office is open all year long!

BICYCLE FOR SALE: Pro BMX complete bike for sale. Classic original Standard Lengthy circa 1995. 3 piece cranks, Mustache handlebar, Peregrine wheels, 990 rear brake, pegs, super beefy dropouts. Hit me with your best price. bmxb@space1026.com

BICYCLE FOR SALE: An adorable Raleigh Space Rider bicycle in a beautiful blue color. Perfect for a 9-15 yr old or a petite adult. \$65. Negotiable & interesting trades a possibility. Contact me at kaelsie@sas.upenn.edu.

BLOGGER FOR HIRE: I am seeking fame and fortune, notoriety and increase in my social standing via employment. Check out my blog, talk it up or talk it down to your friends. Better yet, hire me so that I have less time to blog. Email me: ERMFine2@aol.com or visit: www.UrbanAddiction.com

BOOKS FOR SALE: "Clever and snappy essays..." Karen Gross says of Cassandre Xavier's writing. Xavier is the author of four books: *Secrets & Lies: Poetry and Other Words*, *Manna from Heaven / Oil from the Lamp* (essays), *Open Diary: Making of a Woman/Artist*, and the renaissance negress's guide to life and living. To order, please send \$7 (includes postage) per title, and your name, address, phone & email to: Cassandre Xavier POB 30204, Philadelphia, PA 19103-8204. Please allow 5-10 business days for delivery.

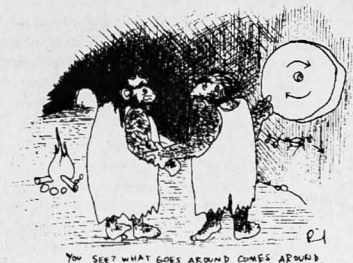
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published: *Core Sample: Portland Art Now*, a full-color catalog documenting the Portland, Oregon, independent art exhibition by the same name. Next up: a collection of essays by *New Yorker* contributor Charles D'Ambrosio. Don't wait! Subscribe now at www.clearcutpress.com. Clear Cut Press, P.O. Box 623, Astoria, OR, 97103.

BOOKS FOR SALE: Encyclopaedia Britannica—Macropedia edition—20 volumes—\$50 or best offer. Call 856-424-0928.

BOOKS FOR SALE: Mike Palecek is an Iowa author, former federal prisoner for peace, newspaper reporter, Congressional candidate. "Well-written and imaginative."—Danny Schechter. www.iowapeace.com

CARTOON:—Caroline Picard



CHIROPRACTOR WANTED: Interested candidate for Chiropractic education seeks guidance from experienced Chiropractor. Looking for mentor. Would be willing to intern/work part time. Contact: matthew_bulman@yahoo.com

CLERK WANTED, PART TIME: Hopeful and burgeoning used bookstore seeks personable, bookloving person with a secretarial bent. Please help me get my financials straight, clean up my computer and streamline my general operations as we chat with customers and ring up sales. Modest hourly wage to start off with potential raises based on performance. Call Molly's Bookstore at 215-923-3367 or email: mollys-books@comcast.net.

COMPANION FOR HIRE: Before November, I hope to know where I will be living next, in a companion position, ideally near my current neighborhood of 48th and Baltimore. If interested, please contact me at jedmckee@yahoo.com,

or 267-243-3841.

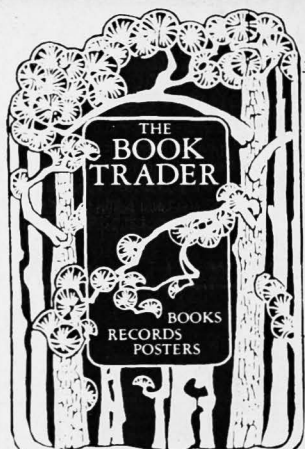
CRITIC FOR HIRE: "The business of the teacher... is to figure out (or if necessary ask) the purpose and meaning of the piece and only then to suggest carefully, thoughtfully, why the purpose and meaning did not come through," wrote John Gardner about writers, but the same is true for visual artists. The visual art critic's job is to figure out if you have carried your idea into your work. Evaluation should begin with the work, not the critic. For information on a studio visit for the purpose of an independent critique, email may808@yahoo.com. I am located in Northern Liberties.

DANCE LESSONS: Slow-ass movement meditation class, featuring Haitian voodoo dance. Find what's hidden inside. Center City location; \$10 per class. Beginners welcome. Contact moonwisdomdances@hotmail.com for more information.

EDITOR FOR HIRE: Editor/writer with national magazine experience available to troubleshoot your news and feature copy. Extensive experience with politics, health care, independent film and pop culture. Online submissions only. Quick turn around. Half of fee paid with submission. Remaining half upon completion. Email Posops@aol.com.

EDITOR FOR HIRE: Book Doctor. Down-to-earth, comprehensive help and encouragement with your novels and short fiction. I'm an experienced teacher, freelance editor and writer, with work published in high-quality literary magazines, newspapers and academic journals. Expect lots of careful, compassionate attention and feedback. Contact David Ebenbach (MFA, PhD), at ebenbach@world.oberlin.edu.

EVENT: 09-01-04 through 09-27-04
EXHIBIT: Printing Philadelphia! Exploring community and the Constitution through print-making. This two-part exhibition includes a juried exhibition of prints created by independent artists and college students and a selection of artwork created by children through Philadelphia Print Collaborative-sponsored workshops at local arts organizations. Work explores the Constitution and how it relates to our lives and our neighborhoods' histories. National Constitution Center, 525 Arch Street, Independence Mall, Philadelphia. Contact person: Robert Wuilfe, rwuilfe@yahoo.com, 215-557-8138. Hours: Mon-Fri 9:30 to 5; Sat/Sun 9:30 to 6.
EVENT: 09-03-04 through 09-18-04...



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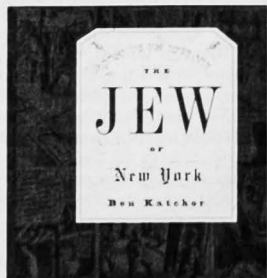
in addition to his flagship LORDWHIMSY.COM, now cordially invites the disembodied public of Earth to his electrical journal and salon: [HTTP://WWW.LIVEJOURNAL.COM/USERS/LORD_WHIMSY/](http://WWW.LIVEJOURNAL.COM/USERS/LORD_WHIMSY/)

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... **PERFORMANCE:** Check out weaving project by K. Pannepacker, *Ignite our Hearts for Peace: A Community Weaving and Vigil for Peace*, at Box Office of Fringe Festival 620 Chestnut. Last year: 7,000 Q-tips. This year: Matches.

EVENT: 09-08-04:

FUNDRAISER: On Saturday, September 18, from 9 a.m. to noon, the RPCA will collect plastics with a 1 or 2 stamped on the bottom and mixed paper for recycling at the Ivy Ridge Train Station parking lot on Umbria St at Parker Ave. Plastics must be rinsed, crushed & caps removed. Paper can include newspapers, junk mail, flattened cardboard boxes, etc. This recycling collection is a fund-raising program supporting our community. Any & all participation is welcomed & appreciated.

EVENT: 09-09-04:

FILM: Hijacking Catastrophe: Screening and discussion. You've seen Fahrenheit. Now see the other 9/11 movie! This new documentary, narrated by NAACP Chairman Julian Bond, looks at the justifications for war in Iraq within the larger context of a two-decade struggle by neo-conservatives to militarize and expand American power abroad, and shows how the Bush Administration sold its controversial plan for aggressive military intervention by deliberately manipulating intelligence, political imagery, the fears of the American people. Thursday, September 9th, 7:00PM at Friends Center, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, \$3 Suggested donation. More Info: <http://www.mediatank.org> or 215.563.1100.

EVENT: 09-10-04:

RECORD RELEASE PARTY: Seven inches of vinyl to be celebrated by onlookers, friends and passersby. Sympathizers record release party, 3d floor Ski lounge @ Doc Watson's @ 216 S. 11th St. www.thnthn.com

EVENT: 09-16-04:

MUSIC: I am hosting an event on Thursday September 16th at Moca's, 3505 Lancaster Ave. that will feature the newest female-fronted, fire-branded, black-rock sensation Younglao, as well as the melodic vocal stylings of United Soul. After the performances, the event will rock all night (or until they kick us out). I request that rockers and hip-hoppers who attend this event also contribute clothing for the winter clothing drive to support the Salvation Army. Moca's also serves an extensive menu that will be available

throughout the show 'til the early morn. For more information on the show, admission, etc., please call 215-386-6678 or www.doitbigger.com.

EVENT, 09-19-04:

ART-MAKING: *Printing Philadelphia: The Rub!* Sunday, September 19, 2004, 11 AM to 4 PM. Artists and the public will make *frottage* prints or rubbings from hundreds of low-relief printing matrices based on stories exemplifying the Bill of Rights and other amendments to the Constitution. There will be a panel discussion at 2 p.m. to discuss the intersection of art and civic engagement, printmaking and the democratic process. National Constitution Center, 525 Arch Street, Independence Mall, Philadelphia. Contact: Caitlin Perkins, Program Coordinator, 215-557-8152, cperkins@solfopro.com.

EVENT, 10-01-04:

ART OPENING: Corporations are people too! **corpoRACIST:** multi-media investigations of the monstrous body and schizophrenic mind of the corporate person. (According to the government, corporations are "legal persons.") An exhibit of sculpture, drawings, paintings, printed clothing, and stickers by Albo Jeavons. Space 1026, 1026 Arch Street, October 1st-29th 2004. Opening reception Friday Oct. 1st, 6 p.m. - 11 p.m. Anti-corporate events and a study group in the gallery throughout the month. www.disin-corporated.org for more info.

FREE BAND NAMES: Superfriends, Quick Brown Fox, The Huxtables, The Children's Television Sweatshop, Vis a Vis, The 911 Commission, Mother Box, Boom Tube, Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandoes, The Girlie Men, What's Her Beef With The Circus? Ogre Town in Not For Sale, Hiram and the Barnstormers, Man plus Man plus Manatee, Money Socks, Plumper, Desperado Inc., The Mangos, The Maggots, The Mandibles, The Manfries, The Mandates, The Managers, The Manifold, The Mansons, Ughert The Manicures, The Man, Curse Before Dawn, The Sloppy Jalopy's, Grandfather, Sixteen Twelves.

JUMPROPE: Wanted, one exercise: Wanted, one exercise: Will pay top dollar—and by that, I mean \$1. Contact kathleenatkins@yahoo.com.

MUSIC FOR SALE: Help support the Cassingle Revival. Buy The Snow Fairies "Pop the Question" EP for less than a faux cheesesteak

at Gianna's. Visit <http://snowfairies.heartonmysleeve.net/> or <http://noise.artclash.com/>
MUSIC FOR SALE: Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea / Mike Aho split LP due to come out in October for Mental Giant Records. For info: baitshop@hotmail.com.

PERFORMERS SEEK AUDIENCE: Rowdy patrons sought for ambitious fringe series featuring Kiki & Herb, Mike Albo, Kate Rigg, Murray Hill and Vanessa Hiday. Visit www.directfromnyc.com for more information and a full schedule.

ATTENTION:

PERSONAL: I've never tried this before so here it goes. I'm a single, white, 41-year-old male who is brand new to Philadelphia (Fishtown area). I just got here from Ohio. I'm 5'7", 190 pounds, artist type guy with short brown hair, goatee, and several professionally done tattoos. I enjoy flea markets and thrift stores, a good cup of coffee in a hip little coffee shop, a good shot of whiskey in a cool dive bar, laughing, cuddling, sex, books, honest intelligent conversation, music and art and lots more. I've previously dated everything from strippers to doctors and everything in between—so your economic bracket (or lack thereof) is not important. I'm seeking someone without a lot of drama or past baggage. Your age is open. Prefer hippy, artist or alternative type female who is honest and down to earth but still knows to have a good time and can still get a little crazy now and then. Friendship first but possible long term relationship if we end up clicking. Contact me at either of these addresses: WHLGGUY26003@AOL.COM or Pete, c/o Boxholder, P.O. Box 3734, Philadelphia, PA 19125

PERSONAL: Happy 30th Birthday to Grandmaster Stevie G. Rock the block, yo! Hugz n' mad love, from your sista and brotha and all your friends (even if they don't know about this shout out).

PERSONAL: A certain Mr. Sweezy sends notice his undying love to his Ms. Sweezy in hopes of more happy days. Our impending union only makes me more sure of our high rating of combined Sweetness and interdependent mojo. Additionally, I remain in high spirits for our upcoming Canadian tour.

ATTENTION:

PERSONAL: Sought: Your Myrna Minkoff to my Ignatius Reilly, for adventures in the absurd, in and beyond city limits. Reply 610-777-9592.

PHOTOGRAPHER FOR HIRE: Wedding Photographer Christopher Farber. http://bill-cramer.com/cf_weddings_gallery/

PHOTOGRAPHER FOR HIRE: Capture that pivotal day in your life, halfway between freedom and captivity. Preserve forever the expression on your face as you bind your life to someone you may or may not want to have sex with five years from now. See my website for portfolio, contact info, and rates: www.sonjasea-wright.com/index.html

POETRY AWARD: Enter the Giovanni's Room International Poetry Award. Open to all gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender poets. Submission guidelines at <http://GRaward.blogspot.com>.

POLITICIAN SEEKS VOTES: Candidate running for office! Matthew Wusinidh is running for State Legislator in the 153rd district. I seek to accelerate the funding for home schooling and allow Pennsylvanians to purchase medicines that are not necessarily approved by the FDA. Help me help you.

RECOMMENDED NOVELS: 1. *This is Not a Novel* by David Markson, 2. *Witch Grass* by Raymond Queneau, 3. *Mr. Mee* by Andrew Crumey, 4. *Aberration of Starlight* by Gilbert Sorrentino, 5. *Invention of Morel* by Adolpho Bioy Casares, 6. *JR* by William Gaddis, 7. *Dhalgren* by Samuel Delany, 8. *Invisible Cities* by Italo Calvino, 9. *Cigarettes* by Harry Mathews, 10. *My Paris* Gail Scott.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

We are in possession of two dozen small birdhouse-like boxes. The boxes are built such that one person can place a document into box, and the box will protect the document from the effects of the elements until a second person happens by and removes the document from the box. We would like to affix these boxes to telephone poles, trees, or some other public surface, and use them to collect letters and documents

from the public. The boxes could be spread out all over the city, the country, or even the world. The question is what kinds of documents we should solicit, and what we should do with the documents after we have obtained them. We have considered using them as a kind of alternative postal system, or as a service for matching the lovelorn to the lovelorn, or dividing the city, state or world into districts or territories and having each territory serviced by one of our boxes. We're still figuring out what to do. Maybe you can help. Send your proposals to getitwhileyoucan@TheIndependent.com c/o The Independent, 1026 Arch St., Phila., 19107.

ROOM FOR RENT: InFusion Coffee & Tea. Spacious (1000 sq ft) 1 room, 2 half baths, beautiful garden patio, fully furnished, orig. terrazzo flr, elegant lighting, a/c and heat, staff on hand at all times. Cheap. Yes it's true! You can rent InFusion for your private party. Call 215-248-1718.

SONG SEEKS SINGER: I wrote a song about my bitchin', much beloved bright red 1972 Dodge Coronet wagon, and I think it is a solid vehicle for Jill Scott. How do I get the song to her? Gimme the high sign, all you know sumphin'-sumphins. Call Todd: 609-386-8786

SUBMISSIONS WANTED: The Keyhole Journal is seeking articles, essays, interviews, artwork, and fiction by people of Christian faith. Our hope is to showcase a diversity of opinion and perspective among Christians. Those interested in helping with production of the magazine are also invited to contact us. We are looking for a few good saints! christsensen66@yahoo.com.

TRAIN BUFFS: Admitted train dorks, Christina D'Ambrosia and Walt Weber, please contact kpic@yahoo.com concerning Southern New Jersey Light Rail Train matter. Pronunciation ... single alerts vs. snide alerts.

TURNABLE FOR SALE: 1 Gemini DJ turntable for sale. Perfect for home listening with any stereo receiver, comes with needle. Or you could be on your way to becoming a really wack DJ. Take your pick. geminidj@space1026.com
VISUALIZATIONS WANTED: Request for global visualization of world peace and moving beyond the money system as we know it. We need a revolution of love and universal healing.

Meditating on love and abundance is the best defense against fear and scarcity. Anyone can do this. Best time to send your positive thoughts: in the bath and during orgasm. Yours in light & gratitude, ARah, of The Mama Goddess Workshop Space, Philadelphia. Communications (with positive content only) may be sent to: ARTivistPublications@hotmail.com.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED: Spiral Q is at it again. Seeking individuals who love to work together, play together, and make puppets together to pull off yet another Peoplehood! We need volunteers to do virtually everything under the sun. Parade takes place on Saturday, October 23. Please call at 215.222.6979 for more information.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED: We just kicked the ass of the FCC in federal court! Wanna know what makes us tick? Volunteers! Prometheus needs help with: legal & technical support, networking & web editing, graphic design, various research projects and general office tasks. We are also looking for one special creative person who has experience with silk screen design/printing for a one time project. If you possess any of these skills and/or you just want to help build a movement for independent grassroots media, contact: anthony@prometheusradio.org or call 215-727-9620. Bask in our hotness at <http://www.prometheusradio.org/>

WEBSITE: Have you checked out MarketEast.com lately? Get the best zines, screenprinted posters, and other limited edition artwork by Space 1026 artists and others from across the U.S. and beyond. Go to www.market-east.com.

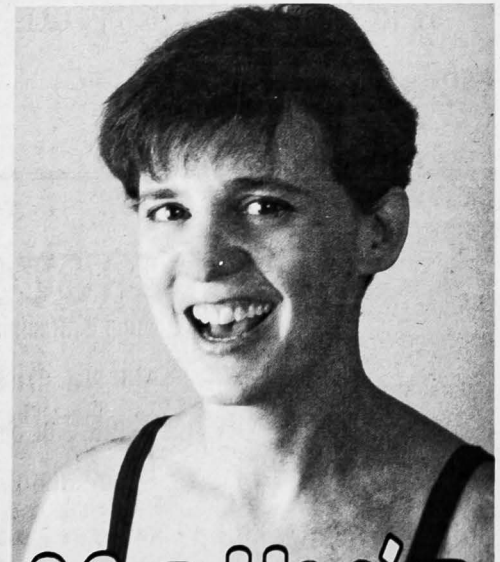
WEBSITE: Webzine—Abhor.org—Independently done website that covers music reviews, columns, interviews, Philadelphia/NYC shows, etc. Also, if anyone is interested in contributing please contact Matt at XXwestonXX@aol.com.

WEBSITE: What happens when one cinephile combines her love of film with her compulsion to make lists? www.andarkos100movies.com.

WEBSITE: www.streetwaveisreal.com. Now you won't have to worry for the rest of your life.
ZOO: Still looking for animals to showcase in public forum. Will buy at current international rates. Especially interested in all marsupials, except for wombats and numbats. Humane treatment and great exposure. I will contact you.

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CASE STUDY N°6: QUARTERLY REPORT

A Season of Sighing Over the Wires

BY BREE SWANN

I'm three months into my stint as a 1-900-WET-SLUT, and now seems like a good time as any to take stock of things. I have had every single one of my make-believe orifices crammed not only with countless fingers, tongues, and cocks, but enormous glow-in-the-dark double-headed dildos shaped like swans, hairbrush handles, perfume bottles, the blunt end of a hammer, and assorted items from the crisper including but not limited to carrots, cucumbers, eggplants, and bananas. I have encouraged strange men to jerk off into a pair of my stolen pantyhose. I have taken them with me to the mall, where we get our nails done together and hunt down the perfect Lycra tube top and hot pants set for them to wear out clubbing. I have violated them in the back of pickup trucks with my handy-dandy anal beads, which I carry in my purple Jansport book bag at all times. I have divulged the fables of the girls' locker room after cheerleading practice, not sparing one luscious, soapy detail. I have been bent over the ninth hole of a golf course, spread wide on the forty-yard line of the football field, and pushed beneath the desks of only like, every last teacher and principal and guidance counselor in the whole school. Today alone, I peed on command three times.

Furthermore, I have offered consolation to the inconsolable, validation to the deprived, understanding to the confused, and company to the terminally lonely. I listened to Ted, 31, describe to me what it feels like to face life as a paraplegic bound indefinitely to his parents' house after a motorcycle accident. He told me,

tearful and panicked, that he'd been a hotshot lawyer and a real asshole to women before this happened. Once, while finger-banging the insatiable bisexual Debbie, 26, I heard the unmistakable sound of an infant crying in the background. When I inquired about this, she sighed and said, "Yeahhh ... I'm babysitting." One of my regular callers, John, 47, tells me heartbreaking stories about his recent divorce after my weekly debauching in various fast food chain restrooms. He and his wife were so in love, he says. He'd been terrified of losing her since before they were even engaged. She was "no good at commitment," but he tried to ignore that for twenty years, until she finally got sick of his stupid selfish tolerance. I'm learning to make all the appropriate coos of sympathy almost as well as I moan and groan and grunt. I didn't coo at Debbie, though. I can be fired for talking to anyone who's in the presence of children, so I promptly hung up on her. Then I took an early lunch break and went to the park and cried for an hour, soothing myself with thoughts of the normal job folding shirts at Banana Republic that I was going to get the next day.

This fantasy of woman I'm hawking only has a little to do with perky tits, an adventurous spirit, and a strange enthusiasm for the word "yes." It has more to do with the idea of unfailing convenience, abundance, permanence. Phone sex lines are open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. When a man calls one, he is guaranteed to speak with someone. Unlike life, phone sex is a sure bet. So I am paid to be there in some form or another, provoking and

receiving the solicitous condescension that creeps into a man's voice when he's getting what he wants. On good days, I am a benevolent cornucopia of human empathy. On bad days, my own contempt for both the men on the other end of the receiver feels like some kind of slow-acting poison eating away at everything I like about myself. Either way, this job can be pretty overwhelming. But what the hell. At least I'm not bored.

Every day, after my shift ends, I walk the seven blocks home looking at everyone I pass very closely, because I'm convinced I know all about them. I know how sometimes they scare themselves, by being too freaky or too hungry or too sad. I know how desperate they are to find something or someone that belongs only to them; I know to what lengths they'll go to secure it for themselves. I look all of them in the eye because I know how necessary it is for people to be seen. I do this automatically, because my job has accustomed me to generosity. Also, I don't kid myself that I'm much different from anyone else anymore. It's too exhausting, and I'm already exhausted.

Bree Swann is writing a series of phone sex case studies for THE INDEPENDENT.

THE MICROSCOPE

AT THE BUS STOP

The Fairweather Friend

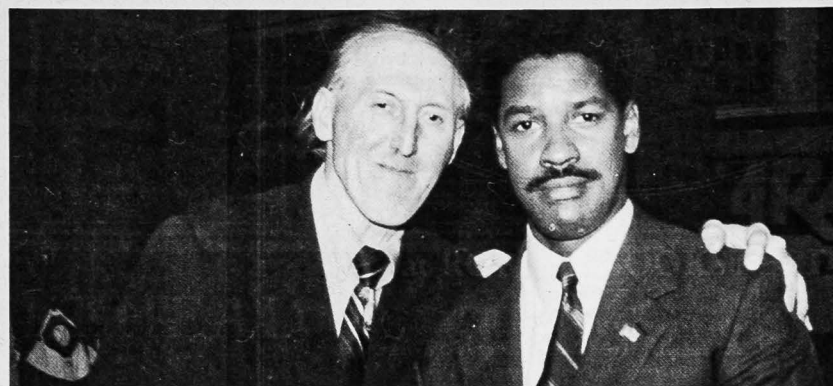
"Hey, [nod and wave] how's it going? I'm not going to hit on you, I'm much older than you are [silence] and I can't teach you anything, that's for sure. Sooooo, I guess there's nothing to talk about but the weather. [Looking around] The sky, the rain, the trees, but it's getting so that you can hardly even look up any more. They're getting a little too strict with that, don't you think? The government and all? Well anyway, I guess I'll get going. See you later."

★★★★

SPOTTINGS

MASS SPECTROGRAPHY

BY CHARLIE V



Charlie V on left, Denzel Washington on right



Charlie V on left, John Ritter on right

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HOROSCOPE: VIRGO, August 23-September 22. Every coin has two sides, and every triangle three. The time you gain by losing a friend allows for self-improvement. That girl was no good, anyway. Taking up a new hobby boosts your self-esteem. *Lucky day: 31*

ADVICE: VIRGO, August 23-September 22. Shy, fussy, worrier. Practical, conservative, hygienic. The truth, Virgo, is that you're kind of a drag. Play it fast and loose; invest in a fistful of lotto tickets. But don't trust your savings to safes. Liquidate! Liquidate! Liquidate!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
BACK TO SCHOOL: September brings bulging backpacks, yellow school buses, and, at long last, light cotton sweaters. It renews Labor, but, since a bill signed by President Grover Cleveland in 1864 so decreed, begins with its Rest. Let no man, woman or child, domesticated beast or youth of any age, lift a finger so that, the American respite, our yearly Sabbath and celebration of the eternal nobility of Work, the glory and respect our Government bestows upon a minimum wage, practiced in an eight-hour stretch of savings and, for those who revere the siren song of One Day Only, idle.	The Fourth Week in September BANNED BOOKS WEEK Top five most frequently challenged books 1990-2000 	September comes from the Latin word, <i>Septem</i> , "meaning not 'pervasive' between the nostrils," but rather, "the number seven." Its birthstone is sapphire.	1 245 121 MUSIC: Phil Elvrim (Mount Ernie/Microphones), Weeds, Woelv @ the First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St., \$8.	2 246 120 TOURNAMENT: Board games, beer, snacks and prizes @ Your House, 10 p.m., \$5 Ante.	3 247 119 MULTIMEDIA: Movies with live Soundtracks.  <i>see side bar</i>	4 248 118 FRINGE: Super Ed's SurReal GongMusic @ the Continental, 2nd and Market sts., 2 p.m., Free.
5 249 117 LEARN SOMETHING: Tour the Eastern State Penitentiary, 22nd St. and Fairmount Ave., Wed-Sun, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., \$9 adults, \$7 students and seniors, \$4 for the kids.	6 250 116 SPORT: The InterAct Theatre Company Kickball Team defends its title @ Palumbo Field, Tenth & Fitzwater sts. 6 p.m., Free.	7 251 115 GENIUS: Is not without peril. When expelling, please keep your seat-belt fastened and your helmet tight. It would be tragic indeed to crash before reaching your peak.	8 252 114 ART OPENING: @ the Institute for Contemporary Art.  <i>see side bar</i>	9 253 113 FILM: Media Tank presents "Hypack Catastrophe: 9/11, Fear, and the Selling of the American Empire" @ the Friends Center, 1501 Cherry St., suggested donation: \$3.	10 254 112 TWO HAIKUS: • In the darkened city tell / Little pigeon flat / A pox on you, SUV! • Too tall longhaired music fan / Why are you so tall? / I want my \$8 back	11 255 111 SOUND & SCREEN: Light of Night at International House.  <i>see side bar</i>
12 256 110 SOUND & SCREEN: Jeanne d'Arc and Loren Connors at International House.  <i>see side bar</i>	13 257 109 MUSIC: The Ex and Macha @ the First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St., 8 p.m., \$10.	14 258 108 COMMUNITY: Books through Bars packing night @ the A-Space, 4722 Baltimore Ave., 7:30-10:30 p.m. Weekly.	15 259 107 ART OPENING: "Back to the Front: Emerging Artists" @ Slough Foundation, 4017 Walnut St., 8 p.m., Free.	16 260 106 READING: Temple University Poets & Writers Series presents Amy Bloom @ Temple University Center, City, 1515 Market St., 8 p.m., Free.	17 261 105 MUSIC: Fly Pan Am, Mono, Bardo Pond @ the First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St., 8 p.m., \$10.	18 262 104 DJ NIGHT: Mr. 10-- Fingers spins hip-hop, funk and reggae @ the 700 Club, 2nd St. and Fairmount Ave., 10 p.m., 21+ Free. Weekly.
19 263 103 CONTEST: Enter the Giovanni's Room International Poetry contest. First place \$100, gift certificate, publication. For details, see award.blogspot.com .	20 264 102 READING: Jorie Green Mark reads from "Bride in Overdrive" @ the Central Branch of the Free Library, 1901 Vine St., 7 p.m., Free.	21 265 101 MUSIC: 2004 Mush Records tour.  <i>see side bar</i>	22 266 100 THE INTERNET: Art/design network InLiquid presents a series of New Media projects @ inliquid.com.	23 267 99 MUSIC: Ghost plays the Khyber, 2nd and Chestnut sts., 9 p.m., 21+, \$12.	24 268 98 FILM: "Conspiracred" premieres @ the Prince Music Theatre, 1412 Chestnut St., 8 p.m., \$10. Call 215-569-5700 for tickets and information.	25 269 97 OPEN MIC: Open mic jam session for spoken word artists musicians, MCs, &c. @ the Rotunda, 4014 Walnut St., 8 p.m., Free. Monthly.
26 270 96 REWIND, REPEAT: Zizek and Libeskind @ Slough Foundation.  <i>see side bar</i>	27 271 95 LECTURE: Caitlin Ryan presents "Sexuality and Social Work: The Missing Discourse" @ Thomas Great Hall, Bryn Mawr College, 7:30 p.m. Free.	28 272 94 ART: Laura Owens and Yinka Shonibare @ the Fabric Workshop and Museum, 1315 Cherry St., 5th and 6th Floor through November 13. Closed Sundays.	29 273 93 Q&A: Somewhere in the city, a Q&A session occurs. And in the front rows, someone considers making a comment or postulating a theory. To that someone. Don't. Just don't.	30 274 92 CLASSICS: The Philadelphia Orchestra presents Czech Warmth, featuring works by Martinu and Dvorak @ the Kimmel Center, 8 p.m. Call 215-883-1999 for tickets.	FLOWER OF THE MONTH:  Haary Aster <i>Aster pilosus</i> (Also known as the Starwort)	T he Aster, which is also known as the Starwort, is used as a filler flower in bouquets and arrangements. Sort of a sad thing, really, to be known as filler, the classified section of horticulture, the person invited to the party to take up space and make the real friends feel popular. Aster symbolizes afterthought, or true love. Are we then to understand true love as itself a thought that comes after--what? After other thoughts, perhaps, of the afterlife, or fine dining. Or after an activity, like a picnic, or a summer's bike ride. Or after aster? Starwort? Starwort, in any case, has the last laugh. Born of the tears of Virgo, or Aster, goddess of innocence, it doesn't fade as quickly as the others. Nic! It fades after.

03 MULTIMEDIA: Movies with Live Soundtracks @ the Fire, 412 W. Girard Ave, 7p.m., 21+, \$7.

In 1998, Xander Marro ushered a small crew of friends and hangers-on into a former costume jewelry warehouse in Providence, Rhode Island for the purpose of watching each other's 16mm and 8mm shorts. There was only one rule: every film had to be accompanied by a live soundtrack. Over the years, MWLS films have been projected to the tune of not only your classic "live band," but interviews, prank phone calls, barking dogs and bouncing ping pong balls. This summer, the program is going on its first tour, curated by Marro and featuring the likes of Matt Brinkman, Ben Conoley, Jo Dery, Peter Glantz, Laura Rodriguez, Carrie Collier, Paper Rad and Retard Riot, among others. Many others. And they're stopping in Philadelphia. They're stopping at the Fire. They're stopping at the Fire for you, and possibly for the sound of Your Live Soundtrack. How cool is that?

two Stan Brakhage films, *Ellipses* (1998) and *Star Garden* (1974). The ensemble—Lee Ranaldo (Sonic Youth), Alan Licht and William Hooker—has accurately a selection of shorts that will precede the features, including works by Ira Cohen, Bruce Connors, Phil Niblock and Malcolm MacLise, with original soundtracks by the Sun Ra Arkestra, Brian Eno, Terry Riley and Angus MacLise. If you're in the mood for something a little less psychedelic, check out Sunday afternoon's screening of the Carl Dreyer classic, *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. Newly re-edited by guitarist Loren Connors, it features a score he wrote specifically for the film. I don't see how endless close-ups of Marie Falconetti's transfixed face could be improved, but there's only one way to find out.

21 MUSIC: Mush Records Tour featuring Her Space Holiday, Neotropic, Octavius and Thavius Beck @ the First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St., 7.30 p.m., \$8.

Full disclosure: I am a little bit obsessed with Her Space Holiday. Brandishing flashing lights and an arsenal of synthesizers and programmed beats, Marc Bianchi both remixes the likes of Aspera Ad Astra, Elastica and Bright Eyes and writes his own gorgeous, atmospheric, confessional, quirky pop symphonies. In the last year, Bianchi has broken up with girlfriend/collaborator Keely and jumped the Tiger, Style ship for Mush Records. And now he's on the Mush tour, still rocking 2003's *The Young Machines*, but maybe introducing some new material? One can only hope. Will it be as great as his other stuff? One can only assume. Will the kids go crazy for the space rock? One can only dream. Oh yeah, there are some other bands playing, too. They're probably alright.

26 REWIND, REPEAT: Slavoj Zizek and Daniel Libeskind on DVD @ Slought Foundation, 4017 Walnut St., Wed-Sat 11 a.m.-6 p.m., through November 6.

In September 2000, everybody's favorite ex-candidate for president of the Republic of Slovenia, Slavoj Žižek, gave a presentation at the University of Pennsylvania entitled "A Lacanian Plea for Fundamentalism." In April of the next year, everybody's favorite architect other than Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind, lectured on "Architecture: The Future of Memory." Slought, which organized the "Theorizing" lecture series that included these talks, will be re-presenting the magic on DVD from September 11 through November 6.

08 ART OPENING: Pepón Osorio, Art Farm, David Lamelas and Amy Sillman @ the Institute for Contemporary Art, 118 S. 36th St., 6 p.m.

Between 1968 and 1978, members of the radical art and architecture collective Ant Farm inflated structures, drove a customized Cadillac El Dorado through a pyramid of burning televisions and buried ten Cadillacs nose-down in a wheat field along Route 66, a project immortalized, or at least referenced, in the Bruce Springsteen song of the same name, "Cadillac Ranch." Nearly thirty years later, the Berkeley Art Museum has organized the first survey of Ant Farm's oeuvre, and the show is making one East coast stop—Philadelphia. Also opening tonight at the ICA are Pepon Osorio's installations based on his work with the city's Department of Human Services; a reconstruction of one of David Lamelas' film and media installations/institutional critiques from the 1960s; and a large-scale painting by Amy Sillman.

11&12 SOUND & SCREEN: Text of Light @ 7 p.m. on Saturday, \$10; The Passion of Joan of Arc @ 1 p.m. on Sunday, \$5, International House, 3701 Chestnut Street.

It's a good weekend for music fans, cineastes and any dilettante lucky enough to fall in the middle of the sound/screen venn diagram. On Saturday, the Text of Light group returns to International House to provide live improvisational accompaniment for

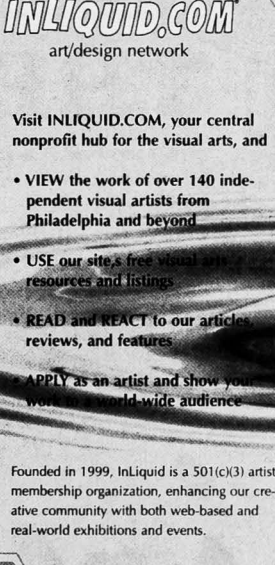


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A vintage glass bottle with a pump dispenser, labeled 'Meadowcroft Bottling Co. J. Stewart Drop Brooklyn'. The bottle is dark and appears to be made of glass. The label is white with black text. The text on the label is 'Meadowcroft Bottling Co.' in a script font, 'J. Stewart Drop' in a bold serif font, and 'Brooklyn' in a script font. Below this, there is a small rectangular box containing the word 'REGISTERED' in a bold, sans-serif font. The bottle is centered in the frame against a plain, light-colored background.

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This Month's Puzzle

HENRY KISSINGER VS. MAO ZEDONG

Who Said What? Match the Madness to the Man

BY HENRY FLOSS



Mao Zedong



Henry Kissinger

In the 20th century, world leaders learned to divide systems of government into two types: their own, and the infidel. This week, after much consideration, I have come to the conclusion that while two types of governments there may be, there is only type of leader: the government man. Pithy and witty, windy and wise, in or out of translation he speaks a truth unlike any but itself. Oft he revels in rhetoric, occasionally he dips into the troughs of common sense, but his words are recorded for the ages, and it is for these ages he speaks. It is in the interest of establishing something of this deep, essential commonality, the global markings of the political playboy, that I have brought together Dr. Henry Kissinger and the man who may or may not have inspired him, Chairman Mao Zedong. Days combing the annals of biography, memoir and interview have yielded a rich crop of quotations that you, gentle peasant, may plow with the sharp steel tractor of your mind. May your crops be fertile and your bombs always hit their marks, and watch for land mines in the field of knowledge! I would hate for you to lose a toe.

DIRECTIONS: To the right you will find twenty-nine aphorisms. Draw a line from the words to the mouth of the man who wrote them. Answers are listed below and to the right.

- Politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed.
- There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full.
- To read too many books is harmful.
- I don't read books, I write them.
- Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac.
- Do not take liberties with women.
- A year ago we were standing at the edge of a precipice. Since then we have taken a large step forward.
- The illegal we do immediately. The unconstitutional takes a little longer.
- Communism is not love. Communism is a hammer which we use to crush the enemy.
- Why should we flagellate ourselves for what the Cambodians did to each other?
- Only a blockhead cudgels his brains on his own, or together with a group, to "find a solution" or "evolve an idea" without making any investigation.
- Each success only buys an admission ticket to a more difficult problem.
- I object to being called a chess genius, because I consider myself to be an all around genius, who just happens to play chess, which is rather different.
- War can only be abolished by war, and in order to get rid of the gun it is necessary to take up the gun.
- Leaders must invoke an alchemy of great vision.
- Donald Rumsfeld is the most ruthless man I have ever met ... and I mean that as a compliment.
- Don't pick on others for their faults.
- If we do what is necessary, all the odds are in our favour.
- Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.
- It is, after all, the responsibility of the expert to operate the familiar and that of the leader to transcend it.
- Lots of the time I'm traveling around. Europe, South America, Iceland. But when I'm home, I don't know, I don't do much. I get up at eleven o'clock maybe ... I never cook my own meals. I don't believe in that stuff. I don't eat in luncheonettes or Automats either. I like a waiter to wait on me. Good restaurants.
- [My country] must carry out some act somewhere in the world which shows its determination to continue to be a world power.
- All the reputedly powerful reactionaries are merely paper tigers. The reason is that they are divorced from the people. Look! Was not Hitler a paper tiger? Was Hitler not overthrown?
- Return everything you borrow.
- Covert action should not be confused with missionary work.
- I am the best player in the world and I am here to prove it.
- Do not damage crops.
- Be open and above board, and don't intrigue and conspire.
- The one thing every man fears is the unknown. When presented with this scenario, individual rights will be willingly relinquished for the guarantee of their well being granted to them by their world government.
- We are all the president's men.
- The atom bomb is a paper tiger ... It looks terrible, but in fact it isn't.
- Apart from their other characteristics, the outstanding thing about [my country's] people is that they are "poor and blank." This may seem a bad thing, but in reality it is a good thing. Poverty gives rise to the desire for change, the desire for action and the desire for revolution. On a blank sheet of paper free from any mark, the freshest and most beautiful pictures can be painted.
- The absence of alternatives clears the mind marvelously.
- Pay for anything you damage.
- We need books, but we must overcome book worship.
- Investigation may be likened to the long months of pregnancy, and solving a problem to the day of birth. To investigate a problem is, indeed, to solve it.

MAO ZEDONG: 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 29, 30, 33
HENRY KISSINGER: 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36
BOBBY FISHER: 13, 21, 26

On Apologies

In my last column, I promised that this month would herald the return of the crossword puzzle, and with it, prizes, rewards and the usual smattering of incentives. Sadly, I must apologize. I spoke too soon.

What, I find myself asking, lifting my eyes to a burning horizon of fumes and tuning my ears to screeching choir of pigeons, is an apology? I wish to bury my head in cotton and stuff my mouth with candies, but, instead, I keep my mind trained on the prize of Knowledge. I wonder, What does it mean to be sorry?

We can assume that an apology is issued after the self-recognition of error, but what of it? Does the apology change the fact that the error has occurred? When I say, dear readers, that I am sorry—as I am!—does it change the time you spent growing excited as the Hours marched on and the Sands ran thin and you, foolishly, it turns out, believed yourself to be gliding ever-nearer to the happy challenge of a crossword? Can I give back to you those precious moments of your life? Can I rewrite their meaning, can I revise their every stroke?

I cannot. What I can do is humbly follow the example of Plato, conducting this inquiry rigorously by first ruling out all obvious false starts. That is, I can start by saying what I do not mean when I say, as I do, that I am sorry.

I do not mean, I have justified or taken away the disappointment I have caused.

I do not mean, I will never err again.

I do not mean, I will never err again. I grow frustrated, and weary, with such self-flagellation! What do I mean? A light dawns. An answer takes shape. I simply mean, puzzlers and colleagues, that by causing you pain, I have caused myself pain. An apology, I find, is nothing more than the verbal expression of the fact that we are sharing a time, however fleeting, of real and true sadness, that your disappointment is also mine. When I say I'm sorry, I say, Allow me to weep with you. I say, Take my hand and acknowledge that I am also a little less alive because of the thing I did. And then forget it.

Until next month, dear friends, at which time the Bureau will offer a puzzle, game or item of Leisure—of what it will consist, I know not, and have learned, the hard way, not to guess.

Your obedient friend,

Henry Floss

Henry Floss
Chairman, Bureau of Puzzles & Games

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